The New Christianity

A Quarterly Journal
for its promotion and interpretation

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TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS

THE SWEDENBORG STUDY

DEVOTIONAL PAGE

BOOK REVIEWS

WINTER, 1937

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TO OUR READERS

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG (1688-1772) was essentially a herald. It was his conviction that in his day a new development lay before Christianity, and that to meet the needs of this development he had been called by the Lord to present to the world a restatement of Christian teaching. Since his day, under the pressure of a variety of influences, many of the dogmas which he criticized have been disappearing. On the other hand, the manner of Christianity which he forecast has been coming into existence. As a scientist and philosopher of eminence in Europe, he saw clearly that the progress of science would have a leading place in bringing about a spirit of inquiry in religion and a restatement of Christian thought. He also forecast a changed attitude toward the Scriptures, which were to him the source of teaching for life and not merely a means of substantiating a prevalent creed. We may be sure that if a new Christian experience comes, with its necessarily altered and deepened Christian thinking, it will be the mind and spirit of the Lord which are effecting the change. It was Swedenborg's conviction that in the work it was given him to do and in the renewal which awaited Christianity, the Lord's promised return to His followers would find fulfilment.

In this general outlook on Christian thought and task, and in the triple conviction that this new Christianity is struggling into being, that it needs constant interpretation from all sides, and that it can be given greater awareness of its own high origin and nature, the editors and sponsors of this magazine offer it to the public.

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The
NEW CHRISTIANITY
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VOL. III WINTER, 1937 No. 1

The Remainder of Expectation

WILLIAM F. WUNSCH

WHAT is the New Church all about? This is a larger question, and a more fundamental one, than the query, "What does the New Church teach?"

To answer it, a degree of historical perspective is required. A reader of the Theological Works of Swedenborg will find that whenever the idea of a "new Church" is put forward in those books, it is regularly accompanied by a brief sketch of mankind's spiritual life. What is meant by a "new Church" becomes plain only from such a retrospect.

In this article we shall not look further back than to the Old Testament period. Swedenborg looked still further back, to earlier religious eras, which, however, are not in the purview of history. To glance no further than the Old Testament days, will give a sufficient light upon our question.

The Old Testament era was a marked advance in the history of man's spiritual life. The advance took place in thought and in experience. It was not free from contradictions or from alien accompaniments—from a clinging fringe, and a broad one, of paganism. The advance was also made intermittently and in a succession of struggles — in recurrent struggles, especially, of the prophetic religion with the priestly and with the popular. Nevertheless, at that time, the highest light and the deepest development which religion enjoyed was in Judea, not only in the growth of a pure monotheism—the conception of the one living and righteous God—but in the response of the pious to that God in the increasing righteousness of their own lives. The advance was a development of a thousand years.

From the first, the Old Testament era was sparkling with more promises than were likely to be realized even in that millennium. From time to time expectation ran high that the ultimate promise, of a kingdom of God ushered in on earth, would be signally realized. It was striven after in the Mosaic legislation, it was attempted with lively hopes in the reformation under Josiah, it was expected in the return from Babylon; all along it was imperfectly attained, as ever. There was a large remainder of expectation. The ideal King had not come, nor had the Messianic day dawned. When things were darkest, in the people's continued subjection to foreign yokes, and in their own meager attainments in faith, apocalypse sprang up to nurse the hope that the oppressive human empires would soon run their course, and a stone, not hewn out by hand, would smite the last of them, shatter it, and itself grow into the mountain of God in the earth.

But this remainder of expectation was too swelling a hope for the Old Testament period to contain within itself. Expectation burst into a new religious era.

Expectation was to see its further realization in a new day. The Christ came and was recognized by a few ready souls. The world's religious light brightened sevenfold—its best light becoming an even fuller light. The One living God was brought nearer in the Visible Saviour. The realities of the religious experience were made plainer and more winsome to thought and heart, by the teaching and life of the Master. In general, the spiritual life of men was given a mighty, epochal impulse. The Christ, pictured as holding the sealed book of human destiny, did take hold on history. A new era set in. In thought and in life, Christianity slowly, and then by ages of special faith more markedly, extended into the world. No one would venture to count the human lives, touched, and changed, and redeemed by the influence of Christianity in the centuries that have followed; no one would think to assess accurately the modification of society, accomplished by the ideals and the spirit of Christianity.

But once more, achievement was attended by aberrations—aberrations from Christ's teaching, aberrations from His example and spirit. In many directions theology and creed traveled away from His mind. Institutions bearing His name forgot the verities of the Christian experience, committed unchristian acts, intruded themselves between the kingdom and its citizen-to-be. Churches obscured when

they did not falsify the spiritual life. They sought something less and even something else than the Christian life. To date there has been a very large remainder of expectation. Daniel's stone, shattering human empires and growing into the mountain of the Lord's house, is not yet a reality. Revelation's picture of the kingdoms of the world become God's and His Christ's, is still not the picture of attained fact. Who would be so bold as to say it is? But then no religious period comes to an end in the full realization of its highest promise. It does so rather in consciousness of its shortcoming. We say that we are at a crisis, not only for the churches—that would be relatively superficial; but in the spiritual life of the world. The crisis consists, however, not only in the continued existence of wide areas of life in Christendom which are not swept by the breath of Christianity. The feeling that this Christianizing is urgent and is the immediate task, also helps to constitute the crisis. We are aware of standards for individual and for society, still unreached, to which we simply must advance. The high pitch of these standards, and not only the pity of actual conditions, contributes to create the crisis.

In other words, again a fresh start must be made. The bulging remainder of expectation from the Christian era is bursting over for realization into still another religious era.

And this is what the "New Church" is all about!

Those words are at least not fully spelled out in a new ecclesiastical body. That would be a meager outcome to all this history! How small and far from stirring that would be in the centuries-long perspective which we have drawn, and which the Theological Works of Swedenborg draw, to lift into sight what they mean by a "new Church." No, the words mean another epoch on which we are launched—an epoch centuries long, never ending, we hope.

That the New Church is, in Swedenborg's view, the active pursuit of the remainder of expectation from the hopes of both Old and New Testament, is plainly enough indicated on the title-page of his concluding publication, *True Christian Religion*. The "new Church" he has in mind, he says, is foretold in Daniel vii. 13 and in Revelation xxi. 1, 2. He gives the words of these Scriptures on the back of the title-page. It is a new age which is foretold, in which the spiritual life will be notably attained again.

This is plain once more from the perspective which he draws in the body of his discussion. He recounts past eras, and logically it must be an era which follows them.

The same fact is plain from the cycles in the spiritual life of man, which he finds indicated in this perspective. Swedenborg conceived that the spiritual life of man, like everything else on earth, is subjected to cycles; like everything else it rises and falls, sweeps to a height and ebbs away. So it did in the Old Testament era. So it did in the Christian era down to his own day. He looked in his conception of a "new Church" to a new era in which the spiritual life would flourish again, and indeed flourish as it never had before. It would embrace all the accumulated remainders of hope from the previous eras, and be the crown of them all.

Let it be noted that in this retrospect and prospect it has to be nothing more nor less than genuine Christianity which he awaited in this new era. Something else is not going to supplant Christianity, but a Christianity is heralded and is going to be sought, by the side of which, he says, Christianity so far attained will seem nominal only (*True Christian Religion,* No. 668). When people persisted in calling what Swedenborg had to say, "Swedenborgianism," and asked what it was, he answered, "The worship of the Lord Jesus Christ." Genuine Christianity is the form which the remainder of expectation now assumes. What more can be made the object of religious effort? What is there higher to seek than a genuine Christianity, achieved in deep personal experience and in prevalent social action and practice? It must be the awaited stage in the ongoing of men's spiritual life, if indeed the Christ holds in His hand the partially unrolled scroll of that history. It is the age-long goal, presented again for epochal effort toward it, which has regularly left us, epoch after epoch, with a large and challenging remainder of expectation.

Now, in this we have a stirring and large enterprise—is there a more commanding one? It is also the concern of every earnest Christian. See in this way what is before us, and there are millions who look forward to it. The same development is also implicit in the aims of earnest religious spirits outside Christendom. This great objective of a renewed and genuine Christianity is something commanding, stirring to young and old.

The possibility of such an epochal development, all Christians would grant; they cherish the hope of it; they feel the need of it. Where Swedenborg, heralding such a development, sweeps on past the convictions of most of us is in the staunch assertion that the new era is a dawning fact, an incipient development. He insists that the kingdom itself presses onward again. The great objective is asserting itself afresh. The remainder of expectation will not be gainsaid. And especially does he sweep on past common belief, in his idea of his mission on behalf of this development. He felt he was called upon to do far more than herald a Christian renaissance; he felt commissioned to equip it with necessary means to its inception. There was a reconstruction of Christian teaching to do; fresh recourse to Scripture had to be opened; the goal of life in an immortal world had to be rendered an energizing and present power in life. He reformulated Christian teaching from Scripture, therefore, and expounded new depths of the Word, and by an unprecedented experience disclosed the manner and presence of the world of the spirit. By no unaided effort of his own, he said. This work of his, as well as the actual initiation of a new Christian day, was the Master's doing, indeed the Master's advent again. Is not that advent a part of the remainder of Christian expectation? No servant ever so completely disappeared before the face of the Master as did Swedenborg, "decreasing" even more than John Baptist did as the Christ "increased." Swedenborg pictures the Christ as leading

the way, and marshalling not only the mighty, unseen influences of His spirit but those of the entire spiritual world for the advance that is a "new Church."

To the great end thus thrown forward upon human effort again—religion as represented in a genuine Christianity—the ecclesiastical institution needs to address itself and needs to be utilized. To the same great end theology needs to be addressed (as Swedenborg addressed it) and needs to be utilized. Neither of these constitutes the end, but is a means to it. When the true end is thus exalted, the Divine initiative, whatever it may be, will have the path made straight for it and will be welcomed. Ardor will grow, and the interest of countless souls will be enlisted. The "New Church" is not about something alien to them. It presages the pursuit of that remainder of expectation for the human soul which history has brought down the lengthening years for men, the wide world over, to pursue once more.

Christianity and Democracy

John W. Spiers

THE current cynicism concerning democracy is easily understandable. Differences in levels of intelligence and the pain and damage caused by ignorant and stupid people are commonplaces of daily experience. Psychologists define intelligence as the ability to see the significance of facts, to discriminate and to discern the reality beneath surface appearances. The ease with which both high and low are misled by our "sawdust Caesars" confirms the results of our intelligence tests for all their imperfection. Unless a people can be raised to the level of an impartial and intelligent choice of their leaders, they are unfit for the freedom of democracy.

But in that case they will not retain their freedom long. A democracy which can survive its own imperfections will prove its fitness to survive. This speaks well, let it be noted, for the saving grace of God in democratic congregational churches.

A very readable book on the struggle for democracy in America is Claude G. Bowers's *Jefferson and Hamilton*. If one is worried at the modern rise of "Pharaohs who know not Joseph," here is an antidote. Its very humor is healing. The fortunes of democracy have ever been precarious; indeed it is an axiom that democratic progress is seldom in straight lines but usually by zigzag paths, taking reverses as they come. South American republics, of which about one-half are now under military dictatorships representing some dominant economic interest, have not learned this lesson yet. Their Latin blood is still too hot and their Catholic philosophy still too impregnated with Caesar-worship and blind obedience. But they will learn some day that there are better ways than bloody palace revolutions.

The Crucial Question

In the British Empire and in the United States we wish, of course, to avoid any such eventuality. The history of English liberal institutions is a glorious one. And as Dr. Edward M. Lancaster says at the end of his book, *A Manual of English History,*

> No essential step in this grand march of the English people towards the ideal of all just government, the greatest good to the greatest number, has been retraced. Temporary checks and defeats have made its ultimate triumphs all the more complete.

Shall we be able to say this fifty years hence? Those of us whose roots run deep into the history and life of the world's greatest democracy are much concerned about the answer.

Whatever other nations may do, our destiny lies in the preservation of our liberal institutions. If we fail here we have failed indeed. But why should we fail? We have every facility to help us. It is no argument to point to ancient Greece and say that its small city states separated by mountain chains made democracy possible; and that Egypt's immense area although unified by the River Nile made it necessary to be governed imperially. The whole world today, because of our marvelous communication and transportation systems, is smaller in many ways than a single city of long ago. And our magnificent schools and churches are well able to provide that intelligence and consecration which are the conditions of freedom. Where then does our difficulty really lie?

The New Revelation

Swedenborg solves this modern riddle with the information that our Divine-Human Lord has made and is advancing His Second Coming through modern forces both destructive and constructive.

The audacity of Swedenborg is breath-taking even to those who find in his works a divine revelation. Take for example his most readable and thought-provoking work, the *Apocalypse Revealed*. Here we are confronted with a Super-Man and a Super-State,—precisely what the world seems to want! The Divine-Human Lord knows no rival

in authority or power. And the Kingdom of God is—in the high sense of universal love—"totalitarian and absolute." The omnipotent operations of these super-powers are described by an eye-witness. "Things seen and heard" thrill the reader on almost every page. "The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble!"

But more than that. Every rival power and system—every Babel which seeks to "reach unto heaven" and to "make a name" for itself—comes up for exposure and condemnation in the most clean-cut criticism ever written. The secret forces behind current history are laid bare; and one sees the lurking demons behind such human absolutisms as communism and fascism and Catholicism and capitalism. Why has the Roman Catholic Church officially allied itself with fascistic capitalism? Why has communism cast off the yoke of religion? The answers are here as clear as day.

A New Religion Coming

In August of 1933 James Gordon Gilkey, a Congregational minister of more than local fame, visited Russia. He describes a visit to the Cathedral of St. Isaac's, the largest and most impressive church in St. Petersburg, and today an anti-religious museum to discredit the very faith it was founded to defend. He says,

> There I saw half-filled bottles which the priests had said contained the tears of the saints, three articles of clothing which the priests had said were worn by the Virgin Mary, and a fragment of stone which—according to the priests—had once been the morsel of bread held by Jesus Himself the night of the last supper.[1]

This sounds like one of Swedenborg's descriptions of Catholic superstition in his *Memorable Relations* at the time of the Last Judgment.

Dr. Gilkey's conclusions likewise suggest Swedenborg's:

> As I watched that strange scene I realized anew the truth of a statement we had heard many times before we entered Russia. The old Russian religion is dying. It may survive in a few scattered localities and in the hearts of a few elderly people, but as far as the Russia of tomorrow is concerned, it is doomed. Within a few years it will be like the memory of the tsars—a dim and fading dream from an ever-receding world.
>
> But while the old religion has been dying in Russia, an entirely new religion has been emerging in our English-speaking world. This was the fact that bore itself in upon my mind as I studied these vicious attacks on the Russian church and realized they do not reach, and cannot reach, the type of church you and I believe in. The old Russian religion was one thing, liberal American Protestantism is another.[1]

Dr. Gilkey then goes on to describe in general terms the same vision of the Kingdom of God, more dimly seen, that Swedenborg shows to us. The coming of the "Kingdom that shall not pass away" is effecting all these changes in the modern world.

[1] *The Christian Century Pulpit*, April, 1934.

In Russia we seem to see how, as the Psalmist puts it, "God maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain." The recent Russian constitution gives religious freedom to that newly formed "proletarian democracy" for the first time in its history. There was no rational liberty for the masses under the old régime, civil or religious.

And yet rational freedom is the corner-stone—Swedenborg's *"Nunc Licet"*—of the temple of the new religion. Will not the "dictatorship of the Divine-Human Lord" some day take the place of the "dictatorship of the proletariat"? The hope seems justified. As the doctrines often remind us, it is easier to sow the seed of new truth into the Gentile mind, than into the "Christian" mind choked up with falsities from its profanations of the Word of God.

A New Social Order

As the situation in Italy suggests, and as Swedenborg observed, "the politics of a country is according to the religion of that country." One's God is the ruling concept and motive throughout the whole life. With the coming of a new religion we may logically, therefore, expect to see the coming of a new social order. Is not that just what we are seeing in the rise of democracy?

Sociologists tell us that there are only two types of society, "Oligarchy" and "Democracy." Their orthodox definitions, in scientific language, are as follows:

> Democracy is a blanket term intended to cover all movements and tendencies in human relationships that make for the elimination of, or compensation for inequalities, whether caused by nature or by man.
>
> Everything that tends to give the same or more power or position or wealth or advantage of any sort to those who already have it in a disproportionate degree as compared to their fellows, is an exemplification of Oligarchy. It is the antithesis of Democracy as defined above.[2]

We should notice that even communism does not take the term "equality" in any stupid literalistic sense, but grades its rewards.

Speaking generally, however, as a professor of Civic Education in Boston University put it:

> Like it or not, believe in the wholesale application of it or not, this is the American Way.[2]

He then proceeded to illustrate his statement by a series of diagrams. These show that, taking 1850 as a starting point, there has been a progressive smoothing off of irrational inequalities in many human relationships. The first chart shows the tide of Racial Democracy. The negro race, for example, was in 1850 in slavery to the white race. Since then, while still greatly handicapped, there has been a marked stride forward for the colored people. The second diagram deals with Caste. In 1850 the old feudal aristocracy still held most of its ancient privileges. With

[2] From the author's notes on lectures on "Civic Education" given by Dr. J. J. Mahoney at Boston University.

the coming of the Industrial Revolution, and the rise of wealthy merchants and manufacturers among the commoners, a rapid change has taken place. Modern capitalism developed and made use of the democratic technique as a means of liberation, until by 1933 (when these charts were prepared) aristocrat and commoner were frequently hard to distinguish in respect to position, wealth and power. The son of a day laborer can secure a college education today, an almost exclusive privilege of the aristocrat a century ago.

Even the sex relationship has been democratized. Woman was virtually the property of man a century ago so far as her legal status went in most cases. We can all remember the battles around the turn of the century for "Women's Rights."

The struggle for Class Democracy is next presented. This is crucial just at present and arises in America from the new aristocracy of wealth. A definition of "capitalism" will help to localize the problem. Webster says,

> Capitalism is an economic system where capital or capitalists play the principal part; the concentration of capital; the power or influence of capital, as when in the hands of a few.

And yet what a smoothing off of the glaring inequalities between the rich and poor has already taken place. The masses, with the exception of some unemployed today, enjoy most advantages of modern civilization. And inheritance taxes and other limitations on great wealth are on the increase in democratic countries. The Civil War in Spain comes in part from this modern conflict between economic feudalism and the rising tide of democracy.

The struggle for Civil Liberties, especially during the reign of Queen Victoria, is called in English History the "Age of Reform." This is closely related to the rise of Religious Freedom. In 1850 the Established Church of England was much more of an aristocrat among the churches than today, and both Catholics and Puritans suffered great disadvantages with persecutions. The vast change that has taken place in these areas alone is truly startling. Russia's new religious and civic freedom is the latest battle to have been won.

He who complains that democracy has failed either forgets or does not face the above facts. The forward sweep of the democratic tidal wave is unmistakable.

What is the next forward push of this wave of democracy? The answer has already been indicated. Mr. Arthur Nash of Cincinnati exemplified it.[3] And in a sermon delivered last February, on *How Much Do We Want Democracy?* Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick puts it in these words:

> It was not an agitator, it was the president of the American Medical Association who said, a year ago, "Something like twenty million Americans are living near or below the threshold of nutritive safety"—that is, they either have not enough to eat or the right things to eat to keep them well—twenty million! Or listen to this: "It is impossible to have democracy in politics and religion, and autocracy in business. It is impossible to invite all able-bodied men to share in choosing mayors and governors and senators, and give them no voice in determining the conditions and rules under which they labor eight or ten hours a day. Universal suffrage is logically and inevitably followed by some form of representation in industrial councils." Did a radical say that? No, a minister of this church a generation ago said that—Dr. Faunce. What he said has become dangerously true now, that we never can have a successful political democracy without in some form having an economic and industrial democracy. So all unfair privilege, all class conflict, all cruel contrasts between luxury and want, all social organization that puts profit above personality and money above manhood, are failures of democracy. Then communism rises in protest. Then dictatorships lift up their ugly heads. Then cynicism about what America stands for attacks Americans themselves and what in this country we took for granted, celebrated with flags and bands on patriotic holidays, falls into peril. No war to make the world safe for it will help—only making democracy real here.[4]

Christianity and Democracy

As Dr. Fosdick observes in the above sermon:

> Christianity and democracy have a kindred attitude towards people. In Christianity the least man matters, even blind Bartimaeus with his handicaps and a child with his helplessness. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me"—that is the essence of Christianity. And in democracy the proudest things we have to show are of the same kind—Lincoln, for example, starting on the frontier so uncouth that even his father said he was roughhewn with an ax and needed smoothing with a jack-plane, and ending, as he sits today, in the Memorial at Washington.

Compare the following given over a broadcast from Madrid by Ossorio Y. Gallerdo, a prominent Catholic conservative:

> A Christian cannot be a Fascist, for Christianity represents the liberation of the human spirit, while fascism is the negation of liberty, the reign of violence, and this not in the service of the humble but to safeguard privilege. . . . A Christian cannot accept the doctrine of race-superiority, nor the policy of exterminating the Jews and Communists.

Christianity and democracy, as this indicates, also have a similar attitude towards minority groups. Both seek to make a community out of our "melting pot" of races and religions. "*Our* country"—how suggestive that is of the Christian's prayer to "*Our* Father." Much work needs to be done, of course, to convert exclusive groups which stand to one side and say "holier than thou" to the rest of us. Totalitarian systems seek to crush and suppress their minorities. And in this indiscriminate and ruthless work the "remnant" often suffer also, as did "the holy seed" of the early Christian church. The statement has often been made of late that "the only place in the world today where minorities have the slightest chance of getting justice is in a democracy."

[3] See his *The Golden Rule in Business;* The Murray Press, Boston.

[4] *The Church Monthly,* June, 1936.

The true Christian religion cannot easily develop under any human absolutism. Indeed, is not this one root difficulty with the growth of the New Church today? How easily we in the churches fall victim, even unconsciously, to the babylonish attitudes of the world, and fail to heed the call of Revelation, "Come out of her, my people, lest ye be a partaker of her sins!" The very souls of our children are threatened as were the males born to Israel in Egypt when Pharaoh demanded their life.

The Early Church

The attitudes and practices of the early Christian church and those of modern democracy at its best are similar. When Paul took a Roman slave into the Christian brotherhood he was a pioneer in that movement which finally led to the freeing of the slaves in England and America eighteen hundred years later. True, that first Christian tide died out centuries ago. It is its "Second Coming" that we behold today.

The early church was a brotherhood, a "family of God." In both Gospels and Epistles this note is struck again and again. Thus Peter writes such advice as this to his flock:

> Be ye all like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tender-hearted, humble-minded. . . . Above all things be fervent in your love among yourselves. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood.

We are all familiar with John's emphasis upon this same "lost chord":

> He that loveth his brother abideth in the light. . . . We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren. . . . We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. . . . If a man say, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen.

It is quite credible when tradition tells us that the young men of Ephesus used to carry the aged John upon a chair into church, and that he would repeatedly say, "Children, love one another." When asked why he so often repeated this, he replied: "Because it is the Lord's precept, and if only it be done, it is enough."

Paul was not in that upper room when the New Commandment of love was given by the Lord, and yet he too echoed the same refrain:

> Concerning love of the brethren, ye have no need that one write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another; for indeed you do it toward all the brethren that are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren, that ye abound in love more and more. . . . In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned towards one another, in honor preferring one another.

We are familiar with his matchless praise of "Charity" in I Corinthians, written to the church that needed this admonition especially. In language of great power he tells what love is, how it thinks, feels, acts, what it endures and the victories it wins.

From whence did the early church get this still novel-sounding message? They preached what they received from the Lord. It was the same spirit that He showed them in the feet-washing and in His high priestly prayer for them that last night. It was His promise of "the Spirit of Truth" or "the Comforter" or "the Holy Spirit" finding fulfilment in them. It was that "I will come unto you" which He foretold.

When the Lord's Supper was celebrated thereafter it was more than just a breaking of bread together; they also shared with one another the absolute love of the Lord—the sense of His presence, the outpouring of His "bread" of love and "wine" of wisdom. It was "a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined."

But what do we see today, not just in the old Greek Orthodox Church of Russia, but all about us? How cold, by comparison, modern definitions of "the brotherhood" sound:

> The visible church is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that are necessary and requisite to the same.[5]

Thus reads the definition formulated by the Anglican Church and adopted by the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Westminster Confession is not essentially different. So also, more proudly, the Catholic idea of the church as expressed by Cardinal Bellarmine:

> The one true church is the congregation of men united by the profession of the same Christian faith and the communion of the same Sacraments under the rule of the legitimate pastors, and especially the one vicar of Christ upon earth.

When did our Lord put preaching and sacraments and church organizations above the ministrations and obligations of love? How can the brotherhood of true Christianity, without which democracy cannot survive, exist when love is dead?

The Way Out

As Swedenborg so often reminds us in *Apocalypse Revealed,* as well as elsewhere, it is the acknowledgment of the Divine-Human Lord which makes the New Church, even as it did the early church. Only so far as this exists can genuine charity exist, because of the operation of the laws of spiritual presence and communion. What then is to be done?

We must, first, seek to disentangle ourselves from those forms and habits of mind in the world about us and within us which block the way to this acknowledgment. Between the first chapters of Revelation with their vision of the risen Lord "in the midst of the candlesticks" and the last

[5] Charles E. Jefferson: *The Building of the Church,* Macmillan Co.

chapters with their vision of the marriage of the New Church as "the Bride" with the Lord, there are scenes of visitation, exposure and judgment upon these evil forms and habits. Swedenborg gives us in general statement the character of these enemies of man. We must translate them into present-day experience.

For example, consider one of the habits of mind and life of "the scarlet woman" in modern terms. As Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, editor of *The Christian Century,* is pointing out, we cannot side with the fascist-communist or Catholic-Communism controversy now going on. There is little to choose in point of ruthlessness between these two human absolutisms; although the apparent sincerity of Russia for world-peace is much in her favor. But Christians cannot join hands with Machiavellians who teach that "the end justifies the means."

Other foes which must be resisted are listed by a committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in an article entitled "The State of the Church" appearing in *The Christian Century* for December 30, 1936. These do not stress, however, the grave falsities concerning the person of the Lord Himself which exist so widely throughout the world. If we could do nothing more than dispel these befogging ideas concerning the Divine-Human Lord within a major portion of the Christian Church herself, we would have made a contribution of infinite worth.

The social implications of this truth of the Divine-Human need to be brought out clearly. For example, everything human is now capable of being glorified by the Divine-Human Lord. Take our Lord's love of the truth, with His clear-cut discrimination and condemnation of pretense and hypocrisy on the one hand, and His clean love for the heavenly possibilities within even the worst of sinners, on the other. Within most men today there seems to be a shyster lawyer who is only too ready to blur all distinctions and make the worst evil to be right, from some ulterior motive; "rationalization," the psychologists call it. To shun this, which is really a hatred of the truth, is to open the way for the Lord's second coming. Even such things as bad music and ugly pictures are sins against Him who loved beauty and praised the lilies of the field. This is what is meant by the love and worship of the Divine-Human. It means bringing the Divine into *the human that now is* throughout the world.

Take another illustration. In *The Messenger* of April 15, 1936, Dr. John R. Swanton gave a summary statement on "The Cooperative Movement." The glaring evils and falsities of our present system of human exploitation have always disturbed me. True enough, there can be no greater mistake than to assume that competition and rivalry, as in games, are incompatible with human brotherhood; but competition ceases to be a friendly game when it kills and crushes so many by cruel wars and oppressive hours and wages. Friendly competition is really cooperation for the common good of all, and not this evil thing we see all about us and across the world today. Are we not right, then, in seeing in Consumers' Cooperation "Democracy's Way Out" of the unregenerate past into the progressively divine-human future? This conviction is hard to escape when one ponders such books as *Consumer Cooperation in America,* by Bertram B. Fowler.

In Conclusion

No human institution or human relationship can be fully effective and become a "brotherhood" except it dwell within the sphere of influence of the Divine-Human Lord. That "the Divine of the Lord" is being felt throughout the world today is both an item of the New Revelation and an experience in the lives of many of us. This Divine-Human sphere of influence is pressing to be received into every human institution and human relationship. As one scans the history of democracy and sees its worthy objectives beneath its faults, the conviction grows that this tide is one "external" being formed by that "internal" which is the Holy Spirit.

To quote Dr. Fosdick again:

> The essence of democracy is to have a whole people say and feel, Our country. Autocracy says, My country. "The state—it is I," said Louis XIV. But democracy says, Our country, and that is a spiritual phenomenon. So in a household where old patriarchal dominance still holds, the father says, My family, but the loveliest thing in the world is a home where parents and all the children say and feel together, Our family. That is a spiritual phenomenon. So, too, when it is right, democracy is of the spirit.[6]

[6] *The Church Monthly,* June, 1936.

DEVOTIONAL PAGE

The Breadth of the Kingdom

Who are these that fly like a cloud,
Or like doves to their windows?
It is the ships which are gathering for me,
With the vessels of Tarshish in the van,
To bring your sons from afar,
Their silver and their gold with them,
In honor of the Lord your God,
The Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you.

ISAIAH LX. 8, 9 (THE OLD TESTAMENT: AN AMERICAN TRANSLATION).

✠

It is doctrinal matters which distinguish churches in Christendom. Thence it is that men call themselves Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists, or Reformed and Evangelical, and by other names. They do so from what is doctrinal alone. This would never be if they would make love to the Lord and charity to the neighbor the principal matter of faith. Doctrinal matters would then be merely matters of opinion about the mysteries of faith, which truly Christian men would permit each man to entertain according to his conscience. They would say from the heart that a man is truly a Christian who lives as a Christian, that is, as the Lord teaches. From all the differing churches one church would thus come about; all dissensions arising from doctrine alone would vanish; in fact, all hatreds of one for another would in a moment be dissipated, and the Lord's kingdom would come on earth.

SWEDENBORG: ARCANA COELESTIA, No. 1799.

✠

Our Heavenly Father, we need breadth of vision to look well upon the things which are Thine. In Thy love Thou dost embrace all mankind. Thou hast left no man without a way to Thee. Move us to watch our narrownesses and to beware of our definitions. Our own way, that indeed let us define, to see it and follow it more surely; but let us not insist it must be our brother's way. For none of us is instructed in all Thy ways. We

. . . *"dare not fix with mete and bound*
The love and power of God."

Amen.

The Era of Liberty: Cradle of the New Church

Marguerite Block

I AM going to attempt this afternoon* a brief interpretation of the age of liberty in which the New Church in Sweden had its birth. The very word *liberty* appeals to us, and I think we are rather apt to over-idealize that era of liberty, and think that the period in which the New Church was born was a perfect one. Such was not the case. The situation in Sweden was anything but ideal.

To understand the measure of success which the New Church had in Sweden, and its sudden decline and practical annihilation, we must discover what that so-called era of liberty really was. We can understand Swedenborg's times better by making a certain analogy and comparison with our own. We, too, have had the experience of living in two ages. For us the break did not come at the beginning of the twentieth century; it came with the World War. The War finished one age completely, and the new age in which we are living now is a very different one. That was approximately what happened in Swedenborg's time.

I think we have all realized a certain dualism in his philosophy, and a certain dualism in his own nature which some people, taking an extreme view, call a split personality. This is very much the same thing from which we all suffer. Most of us were born in the nineteenth century, and that means a great deal. The nineteenth century was very different from the twentieth. Nearly all of us, having had our days broken in two by the World War, realize that there is a certain split in ourselves which perhaps can never be healed, and that is something we must realize in connection with Swedenborg. His life was lived in two centuries. He was born at the end of the seventeenth century. The split in the world at his time did not come at the turn of the century. History is not made as neatly as that. His world fell to pieces at the end of a war, just as ours did; and as our great change came in 1918, so his change came in 1719, in the first quarter of the century.

It is significant that the whole historical and political situation just made a complete break. I am going to try to outline what those two centuries, the seventeenth and eighteenth, in which Swedenborg's life fell, meant for Swedenborg and the New Church, because they are all bound together. He does not just exist in a vacuum. We have to understand his personality and his teachings in relation to this larger background.

The seventeenth century was what in Swedish is called *Stormaktstiden*—the period of great power. At this time Sweden was suffering from what we might call delusions of grandeur. She thought of herself as the most powerful country in Europe, and tried to carve out for herself a great empire,—she came very near doing it. At the very beginning of the seventeenth century under Charles IX she had started on an imperialistic career, and he was followed by other kings with the same idea. Perhaps we have not realized what that attempted conquest cost Sweden. But that inner destruction and disintegration is part of this whole picture, and a very important part. As we know, this career of imperialism was carried on straight through the seventeenth century. The philosophers of that period—men like Olaf Rudbeck—had the most exalted idea of Sweden's place in the cosmic plan. He wrote a strange work, the *Atlantica,* in which he saw Sweden as the original home of culture, and everything of value in the world! We can hardly exaggerate the psychology of that period. When you take the seventeenth century as a whole all over Europe, you are impressed by its grand, ornate and impressive architecture; the magnificence of the costumes worn. It was a grand, swashbuckling, heroic period. The great hero of Sweden was Gustavus Adolphus. He was a great warrior, a character of great simplicity and charm, and he exerted a tremendous influence on the Swedish character. The whole seventeenth century was a period when every one thought he could accomplish anything.

As a matter of fact, Sweden did accomplish a great deal; when you look at the map and see that she owned as part of her empire large areas of Russia, Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Germany, you can see that this little country of the north, poor in population and poor in resources, had accomplished a marvelous feat of imperialism. Perhaps you will remember that Swedenborg in his boyhood, as a student in Upsala, wrote grandiloquent Latin poems in honor of Charles XII, and his great general, Magnus Stenbock. Those poems are full of the spirit of grandeur from which the whole period was suffering. Patriotism, nationalism and imperialism were rampant. It is interesting to see that in his boyhood he had that enthusiasm for the heroic figures of his day.

Then came the collapse. Of course we who are fortunate enough to be Americans did not suffer from the collapse after the World War, as did the people of Europe. The utter, complete disintegration of Germany was similar to that of Sweden at the end of the wars of Charles XII. When he died so suddenly at the siege of Fredriksten the whole empire fell to pieces. Sweden's enemies gathered around and proceeded to lop off her possessions, and Sweden was left once more her own small self. The economic situation was terrible. That also we can understand by comparing the economic situation of Germany at the end of the World War. Sweden had been bled for over a hundred years of war. The mining industry had been developed to a very high degree, but was not able to carry the burden of financing the wars alone. Taxation was terrific; so that when the empire collapsed in 1719, we have a

*This address was given at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Boston, January 10, 1937.

country left poverty-stricken, disillusioned, and definitely deflated. That was when Swedenborg came into active political life.

The form of government of the seventeenth century had been absolute monarchy. Although Sweden had its parliament, the kings of the Vasa line had ruled more as absolute than as constitutional monarchs; and especially was that absolutism strengthened in the reign of Charles XI, when the power of the nobles was reduced. All crown lands which had been parceled out to the great noblemen now were taken back, and the nobility was reduced to impotence. This may sound good to us who believe in democracy, but it was not, for the nobility had been an educated and competent ruling class. Charles XII took the government into his own hands and carried the whole of Sweden into the abyss, and the nobility were helpless to stop the catastrophe. After his death a new constitution was drawn up, and Charles's sister came to the throne, but merely as a figurehead. She had to sign away practically all the monarchical power and give it back into the hands of parliament.

Swedenborg took his seat in the House of Nobles in 1719. His family were ennobled by the queen at the earnest solicitation of his father, Jesper Svedberg, who was quite aware of the advantages of rank. It was in that very year the era of freedom began. It is also interesting to note that the year in which he died, 1772, was the very year when this era came to an end, when Gustaf III came to the throne of Sweden, and took over supreme power. How brief the era of liberty was,—and it coincided exactly with Swedenborg's political career. It is rarely that the dates fit as nicely as that.

Now I want to try to draw a picture of this complete change of thought and of atmosphere in which the second part of Swedenborg's life was lived. At that time he was thirty-one years old. As we know from modern psychology, it is the early years that count. The first thirty-one years of his life were lived under the old régime—in the "horse and buggy" days of the seventeenth century. The second part was lived under the new régime—shall we call it the "New Deal"? The age of freedom was very definitely a new deal. What it amounted to politically was an era of party strife. Two dominant parties arose in the parliament. One called themselves "Hats"; the other "Caps." The "Hats" were the aristocrats, the "Caps" were the commoners. The "Hats" were trying to carry over the old psychology, the old political ideas of the seventeenth century. They had learned nothing. They were still militarists; they had not had enough of war. The "Caps" were the liberals, those who believed more in democracy, and were anxious to make Sweden a free country, free from autocratic control. But neither party had any real regard for the welfare of Sweden, and almost brought her to another catastrophe. Swedenborg belonged to neither party. When the policies of one side seemed best he voted for them, and vice versa, and kept himself free from close party affiliation.

His political career is of great importance, and I would like to outline one or two points in which I think we can feel he was of the new age and of the new world—not merely this era that lasted such a short time in Sweden, but the era of liberty into which we hope we are about to enter in the near future. Swedenborg did his best to keep the Hat party from starting another war with Russia. He was not a militarist—of that we can be glad and certain. His great contribution to the economic life of his period was his work in connection with commerce and industry, and fiscal matters. It is true that Sweden made a rapid recovery, and that was due to an enlightened economic policy. In the House of Parliament men of great ability could see that the only hope for Sweden was to build up her industries, and those industries were protected and given subsidies and aided in every possible way. It was to the building up of those industries that Swedenborg contributed in his political life, and as a member of the Board of Mines played a great part in this economic regeneration.

But it is not only the political, historical and economic situation which is important; it is the intellectual atmosphere of those two centuries which we must understand. We have to understand the seventeenth century. When Swedenborg was a little boy in Upsala, where his father was a professor of theology, the Cartesian controversy had just come to an end. Sweden was very much behind the rest of Europe in her intellectual development. She almost missed the Renaissance altogether. Even in the late seventeenth century the prevailing thought was the old scholasticism. Sweden was still thinking in terms of medieval philosophy based on Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas's interpretation of Aristotle. The philosophy of DesCartes had just begun to make an impression on Sweden. The new seventeenth century science had partly penetrated Swedish thought, but it seems as if the humanising influences of the Renaissance had scarcely reached Sweden at all.

So Swedenborg at the University of Upsala had received an education which was almost medieval,—a very meager education, based on the old scholastic ideas, and far from adequate for the new age into which he was plunged. He was obliged to go abroad for the science that he needed. The early influences of his life were entirely theological and churchly. His father was a professor of theology, and later a bishop. The whole atmosphere of the child's life was that of a clerical family, but when he was fifteen his father was made Bishop of Skara, and he was left in Upsala in charge of his brother-in-law Eric Benzelius, who was heart and soul converted to the new science. To him science opened out the future, and under his influence the boy came to feel that science was the medium through which he must do his work. His contributions to that science were simply colossal. And so you have there a break from the seventeenth century age of religion, of scholasticism, of theology, to the new age which was to be the eighteenth century, the age of reason, of enlightenment, of science. This made a tremendous difference in

his development. At last the battle was won and the new science took hold in Sweden, and we find great men like Linnaeus and Polhem, and many others of high attainment in the scientific world. It was in that atmosphere that Swedenborg lived the second part of his life.

It is easy for us to think of these changes as complete reversals of thought. But that is never true. The opposite trend of thought remains; it becomes an undercurrent. Now the seventeenth century was a highly romantic period, with its delusions of grandeur. That romanticism carried straight through the so-called age of reason and blossomed again; it ran underground and came to flower once more in the nineteenth century. The eighteenth century was an age of reason, but with qualifications, with a very definite undercurrent. That has a bearing on religion. It tells the story of the history of the New Church in Sweden. The state church had become, by the end of the century, so hard in form that it was absolutely closed to new ideas, and new developments of all sorts were coming to birth outside the church. There was an invasion from Germany of what we call Pietism. It was a warm, evangelical, individual type of religion, which believed in the possibility of a mystical relationship between the worshipper and God; one was not saved by faith alone, but by faith expressed in a life of good works; it was only the religious *life* that counted. As Swedenborg said, the life of religion is to do good. This was not original with Swedenborg. His own father had said practically the same thing. Jesper Svedberg was advanced for a man of his age, and felt the need for an active religion. He was accused of pietism because of his sympathy for the evangelical religion from Germany. The Moravians, also, had considerable success in Sweden. All of this was in the early part of Swedenborg's life and he was exposed to those influences. These movements had frightened the state church and a whole series of laws were enacted to combat the growth of the new heresies; measures which prohibited the publication or the importation of Pietistic literature, and forbade assembly for worship anywhere outside the state church. This is important because these laws were used later as a weapon against the New Church.

And there were other factors as well. The first followers of Swedenborg were ecclesiastics. There was the Gothenburg trial in which Beyer and Rosén were persecuted for Swedenborgianism. And in the diocese of Skara, where his father had been bishop, Swedenborg's teachings took hold among the clergy. Of course these developments were disturbing to the church authorities and repressive measures were used. The state church, being a department of government, had all the machinery of government at its disposal. It was not long before the censor had prohibited the importation of the writings of Swedenborg.

Besides the clergy there were also many of the nobility who embraced his teachings. There was the Philanthropic Exegetical Society with its hundred and fifty members, who unfortunately had embraced those teachings along with a great deal else, including spiritism, mesmerism, alchemy, and practically every type of fantastic mysticism which formed part of that undercurrent from past centuries. They pursued the vain dream of the alchemists; they practised hypnotism; they held spiritualistic séances; they cast out evil spirits; in short, they flew in the face of all the staid conventions of the day, and aroused the enmity of the most powerful groups in Sweden. Among these were the medical men, who did not like the idea of healing by mesmerism. So the men of science also became enemies of Swedenborgianism.

Another group which joined the attack were the philosophers. The leader of the French rationalistic school, Johan Henrik Kellgren, a disciple of Voltaire, was an enemy of all religion, and of Christianity in particular. In his newspaper he began a campaign of ridicule against the Philanthropic Exegetical Society on the grounds that Swedenborgianism was unscientific, contrary to reason, and the product of a disordered mind. The academic philosophers and theologians also joined in the fray. A doctoral dissertation was written at Upsala University to prove that Swedenborg had gotten all his teachings from the neoplatonists, and not from revelation. All these converging lines of attack met at last, and in less than a quarter of a century the New Church was practically destroyed in Sweden.

In the life and the teachings of Swedenborg we come again and again upon a dualism,—a conflict between these two opposing types of thought: the one a strand of rationalism characteristic of the eighteenth century; the other, from the seventeenth,—a strand of full-blooded neoplatonic mysticism, grounded in the firm belief in a spiritual universe impinging upon the material world in which we live. In his philosophical system he made a valiant effort to reconcile these opposites. In the conflict which his teachings aroused among his compatriots we may see in miniature a picture of the greater battle between two great schools of thought,—a battle which began in the Greek world in the sixth century B. C. And we can understand the place he occupies in a philosophical tradition extending down the ages from Pythagoras to Henri Bergson,—a tradition which stresses the supremacy of spirit over matter, and of intuition over reason. And this understanding should help us separate those portions of his teachings which have a universal application from those which are "dated," and relevant only to the period in which he lived. If he were alive today he could not have said some of the things he did,—many of his scientific conceptions would have had to be different. But quite enough is left to keep us all very busy for a long time to come trying to make the "New Church" come true in this "brave New World" of ours!

TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS

You know how to interpret the look of the earth and sky; and why can you not interpret this present time? Luke xii. 56 (Goodspeed).

Literalism Lingers

CERTAIN ways of using the Bible retreat before information slowly, if at all.

Perhaps the fact that we do not any longer cite Scripture for witchcraft and its punishment should encourage us. But that use of Scripture held on all too long. And during the time it seemed a possible use of Scripture, a million people in all lands suffered death for witchcraft. Earnest and good people engaged, as they thought with justification, in fearful cruelties. Nor did they learn better from Scripture. Science let us know the mental and nervous troubles which were mistaken for the practice of witchcraft. It became impossible to quote a Scripture—"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exodus xxii. 18)—against the increasing sum of medical and psychological information. No responsible government today can be imagined including a similar statute among its laws.

The stubborn retreat of a scripturally rooted belief in the reality of witches, and its retreating before the advance of non-biblical information, should warn us rather than encourage us.

The use of the Bible can be rendered more intelligent by better knowledge of the Bible itself.

A preacher in America's largest city declared recently that woman's present equality with man politically and as a wage-earner is directly contrary to the Word of God. Eve, he said, was indeed created equal in all things to Adam, but as she took the initiative in the first sin, it was part of God's curse that women should be subservient to men. Not only does this view ignore the generally conceded fact that the early chapters of Genesis are not historical record; it forgets that the Bible contains an unfolding truth, and that what is said in Genesis is not all that is said, or necessarily the same as what later comes to be said. What would the preacher say of the Christ's equal treatment of man and woman? Also, curses can be lifted.

Another better kind of knowledge about the Bible would help with another untenable reading of it. In Germany, we are told, a division of the International Bible Students has become "a serious menace," in attracting communists into it. But its distastefulness to the German government was already present in its biblical teachings. These students read such Scriptures as Daniel xi. 21-25, 36, 44 and 45 of Mr. Hitler and his downfall. That reading rests in untenable conceptions of apocalyptic literature, which are impossible in the face of a respectable study of that literature.

It does not help the standing of the Bible, to have impossible views of it—held earnestly by Bible readers—corrected by non-biblical knowledge, when a better knowledge of the Bible itself would lead us out of those views.

A Bible to Enjoy

Third or fourth among best-selling non-fiction works at the moment stands "The Bible—Designed to be Read as Living Literature." Many a reader familiar with the Bible is reading with a new zest; many a stranger to the Bible is wondering that it can be so interesting. The editor, Ernest Sutherland Bates, has accomplished an appealing combination of the force of the most recent Bible information and the force of the beauty of the well loved Authorized Version, substituting other translation in only a few books. Some books have been shortened or even omitted. Each kind of literature at once makes itself known to the eye—poetry appears in poetic form, drama in colloquy, and so on. Readability and attractive dress have been sought, and are secured. There are a few dubious items of information; changed translation from that used, is often called for; but here is a handsome edition of the Bible's most readable contents for one to own and enjoy.

Writing the History of Mercy

The other day an eager-looking man said he wished he could find a history of the kingdom of God. Histories of the ecclesiastical institutions of mankind, he remarked, were plentiful. What he desired was something more profound, more vital—a history of the kingdom of God, as men's lives have moved toward it or fallen away from it.

The Bible is history and prophecy of the kingdom. In his Bible expositions, Swedenborg traced a number of eras—two of them before the Old Testament era—in which the race moved toward the kingdom, came to that ever imperfect realization of it which marks our life, and sadly receded from it. He attempted at least outlines of a history of the kingdom. But who shall have the spiritual insight and the historical knowledge to write us such a history?

Even if we single out a characteristic beatitude of the kingdom, like the spirit of mercy, who shall do a history of this one trait?

Yet the history of mercy is being written.

A clergyman recently rebuked Christians for their repeated references to the Old Testament as a book of stern justice, even of wrath, but not of mercy and love. They seemed to be under the necessity of contrasting the Old Testament as a book of stern law with the New Testament as a book of love and compassion. But, said he, the two great commandments of love to God and man were quoted by the Lord from the Old Testament. "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," He quoted from Hosea. The history of mercy was being written in the Old Testament. The humane spirit made a decisive step forward, as early as the Mosaic legislation.

The spirit of mercy continued to write history in the Christian era. There was the unprecedented care of the weak and the unfortunate, which Christianity inspired in stern, Roman times. There was the rise of hospital and asylum, and the coming of the nursing profession. More recently, agencies of social welfare have become legion. There are other spirits warring with the spirit of compassion, but this writes history, too, not so much in books but in practices and laws. Are we not to see it writing history in laws enforcing more humane working conditions, insuring against accident, establishing minimum wages, preventing exploitation of children, establishing unemployment insurance? Recent decisions of a New York court have gone far towards bringing a long denied social mercy to the person illegitimately born.

One might contend that the spirit of mercy is not so real and potent as all this. It is demand for rights, for example, which brings these changes. Is it? In the history of the hospital, for instance? But whatever other motives and pressures are operating, the spirit of mercy is given new room. Nor is it unreal because we do not see a multitude manifestly animated by it. The spirit of oppression is with us, too. It is intangible. We do not say it is actively exercised by this man and that man, though our civilization is full of oppression, often inherent in the structure of society. For inability to trace the spirit of oppression to those obviously animated by it, we do not then say it is non-existent. Doubtless the history of mercy is written by an invisible Hand.

A Theology Wanted

A commentator upon the year 1936 in religion chooses to let his comment branch out from a single reminiscence—the request by a well-known rector for a moratorium on preaching. Dr. Dieffenbach takes Dr. Fleming's request to be an implied criticism that sermons have too little substance; in other words, that they issue from men who have no solid doctrinal furnishings. The *Boston Evening Transcript* commentator describes the decline of theology, and gives reasons for it and then also indicates some signs of the revival of theological interest. "Religion is as potent as its theology," he says; and "there is a call 'for a renewal of concern for theology.' "

The theological student of Swedenborg has a supreme interest in any such trend. He will be wise to see what is involved, or what the renewal of concern really denotes. It will not mean a disposition to adopt some body of tenets. It will mean the intensified prosecution of the reconstruction of Christian thought. And it is materials for this reconstruction that are wanted—he can count on it there will be no rush to a readymade and complete structure. Does he think he has such a structure? Or has he a body of teaching to think out himself? And will he help with the materials which he can use pertinently, to build with his fellows toward a living theology with religious power?

The News Behind the News

We presume this is not a copyrighted phrase. It is a recurring one. It means sometimes news which is not ordinarily given us or to which access is more difficult. Sometimes it means trends explaining events, tendencies of which only the historically informed are aware.

In all the cross-currents of the world's religious life and particularly of Christendom's life, is it to be supposed there are no happenings of which we do not usually hear? No tendencies, even forces gathering, which would set what we do see in a new light, if we knew of them?

In some such way the New Churchman thinks of what he can call the Gospel of the New Church. In one sense, that Gospel is Christianity, though it is a Christianity still to be realized. He has no substitute for that Gospel. But he also cherishes the conviction that forces untold are setting in toward a fresh realization of Christianity. The mental and moral world is being fashioned for speeding a new Christian growth. He feels that this development is heralded in Swedenborg's Scripture expositions. He is hopeful and convinced that a return of the Christ is taking place, unseen, being made in spirit and in truth. He feels that the unseen world is necessarily the Christ's collaborator. It has the news, as it had the news of the Incarnation.

We talk today of the "crisis" theology of Barthian authorship; but this seems at least a more profound "crisis" theology. There is, as a matter of fact, urgent pressure toward a Christianity as yet unattained; is this pressure of our originating? There have been repeated judgments of erroneous dogmas and of sub-Christian standards; is the light of these judgments our proud intelligence? There is increasing bafflement as to what to do, how to seize on redeeming might, how to reconceive the Christian message. May it be that Some One is seeking a path for Himself in a new acknowledgment of Him? Even in a very humbling confession that He is making His promised return? We are willing to say that that return is "imminent," and presume to set the day. We are willing to say it began at Pentecost, for we bow easily before an historical fact far in the past. Or we prefer not to reckon at all with these "apocalyptic expectations," and actually pass the Lord's words by. The one humbling acknowledgment that the Return is in current progress, when we "think not," that acknowledgment is hardly won.

Is there such news behind all we can observe and report—that the Christ is returning?

W. F. W.

THE SWEDENBORG STUDY

Into this department we invite the investigating mind which seeks a close study of the many questions with which the Theological Works of Swedenborg confront active students. Questions of a more restricted interest can be considered, and a technical treatment is possible here which is not feasible in general articles.

Preface to a Psychological Interpretation of Swedenborg

HOWARD DAVIS SPOERL

STUDENTS of Swedenborg have often remarked the surprisingly small amount of attention that Swedenborg, himself a psychological phenomenon, has received from psychologists. William James, for example, who wrote the best known classic on religious mysticism, and who had good reason for including the facts about Swedenborg in his material, does not once cite this name in the index to his book.[1] The same omission is to be observed generally in the case of other psychologists of religion. At least one New-Church scholar, however, has endeavored to supply the lack, one contribution being the pamphlet published by John Whitehead in 1909.[2] In this study attention was called to the significance of such phenomena as automatic writing and double consciousness in so far as what was then known about them applied to Swedenborg. Another notable exception is to be found in an article by the psychoanalyst Eduard Hitschmann, written more than twenty years ago.[3] After diagnosing Swedenborg as a victim of paranoia, this author expressed the expectation that his judgment "might later be amplified from such additional data as should become available."

The recent appearance of a second psychoanalytical study devoted exclusively to the circumstances of Swedenborg's conversion bids fair to awaken the interest of psychologists in the subject, while causing some dismay to many adherents of the New Church.[4] In substance, this new article, by Alfred von Winterstein, confirms Hitschmann's prediction, elaborating the latter's diagnosis with the aid of many of the more spectacular terms and concepts which form the repertoire of psychoanalysis. Von Winterstein's work was made possible by the republication of Swedenborg's dream diary,[5] which was apparently not accessible to Hitschmann, and which only lately has been publicized to any considerable extent by the writings of Lamm and Gruhle.[6]

As most laymen are by now aware, the interpretation of dreams constitutes one of the corner-stones of psychoanalysis as developed by Sigmund Freud. It follows that, in keeping his diary of dreams during the period of the great change in his life, Swedenborg was unwittingly exposing himself to the one important modern device for investigating man's inner life by this avenue of expression. That the significance which psychoanalysis attaches to dreams is in direct line with Freud's theory of the sex urge as the sole determinant of human behavior, is likewise a matter of common knowledge.

Swedenborg's dreams do not supply the only data that von Winterstein utilizes in making his psychoanalytical investigation. He has examined much of the biographical material about Swedenborg, old and new, and his study concerns three separate problems. These are: (1) the *psychoanalytical* problem of Swedenborg's development from infancy up to the time of his conversion (illumination), (2) the *psychological* problem of the religious crisis that marked the height of the conversion and also the turning point in Swedenborg's professional career, and (3) the *psychiatric* problem of the mental outcome, which involves the diagnosing or characterization of Swedenborg's deviation in psychological respects from the rest of mankind.

Von Winterstein's analysis of Swedenborg by the approved Freudian method takes its departure from the finding that Swedenborg's "Oedipus complex" was never satisfactorily resolved. (The Oedipus complex in psychoanalysis, named from the Greek myth concerning Oedipus' tragic murder of his father and marriage to his mother, is held by Freudians to be a normal and universal childhood phenomenon, based in boys on symbolic jealousy of the father's relations with the mother; normally it is superseded or "resolved" early in life, but it sometimes lingers on in the "unconscious" as a "repression" and causes numerous adult complications.) Since Swedenborg's mother died when he was but a few years old, and in view of other psychoanalytical evidence which need not be stated here, it appears that his Oedipus complex was, moreover, of the inverted or "negative" type. In other words, the internal events in Swedenborg's entire life were activated by a "repressed" and unconscious homosexual attachment to his

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, New York: Longmans, Green, 1902.
[2] *A Study of Swedenborg's Psychical States and Experiences*, Boston: Massachusetts New-Church Union, 1909.
[3] "Swedenborgs Paranoia," *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse*, 1912, III, p. 32.
[4] "Swedenborgs religiöse Krise und sein Traumtagebuch," *Imago*, 1936, XXII, 292-338.
[5] *Emanuel Swedenborgs Traumtagebuch aus dem Jahre 1744*, Hamburg: Hamburger Handdruck, 1925. Tr. by Ilse Meyer-Lüne.
[6] Lamm, Martin, *Swedenborg. Eine Studie über seine Entwicklung zum Mystiker und Geisterseher*, Leipzig: 1922. Gruhle, W., "Swedenborgs Träume. Ein Beitrag zur Phänomenologie seiner Mystik," *Psychologische Forschung*, 1924, V.

father! Psychoanalysis seems often to work by opposites. Thus the "proof" of this contention is seen by von Winterstein in the allegation that Swedenborg once quarreled with his father over money, and also in certain recorded features of the so-called London experience. The most striking and abiding evidence is taken to consist in the significance of God (psychoanalytical symbol of "father") to Swedenborg before and after his conversion.

The outwardly spectacular shift in Swedenborg's activity, from science to religion, at the time of his spiritual awakening, was matched in his inner experience by his belief that his scientific labors, as naturalistic ventures, were a form of vanity, a glorification of self rather than of God. Von Winterstein applies the standard jargon of psychoanalysis to this change, and on the basis of the unresolved Oedipus complex demonstrates to his own satisfaction that Swedenborg, in undergoing the shift, finally acknowledged the purport of his homosexual attachment and developed paranoia as a kind of psychological penalty for his perversity. The turning to God is merely a symbol for accepting and condoning, at least in a disguised form, the implied relation to his father, who at the time had been dead for some years. The rest of von Winterstein's psychoanalytical thesis is simply a filling in of the details of this general outline from evidence gathered by interpreting the dreams according to the Freudian system of sexual symbolism. A few quotations from Swedenborg's theological works are adduced to indicate that the great mystic's entire structure of religious revelation might be explained in a similar way as a tissue of delusions subsisting in countless manifestations of perversion.

In presenting this account of von Winterstein's theory the present writer, while rejecting the whole psychoanalytical interpretation, wishes to emphasize the fact that its detailed development is not merely a superficial and cavalier treatment of Swedenborg. This means that many psychoanalysts and many psychologists who are not psychoanalysts will probably view von Winterstein's article with sympathetic eyes. As is often the case with psychoanalytical interpretations, this explanation of Swedenborg's life and activities contains many highly plausible and exceedingly shrewd observations when examined in detail. If one admits with Freud (and who does not?) that *some* mental confusion and maladjustment is caused by repressed and warped sexual impulses, one is often constrained by the sheer boldness of particular symbolic interpretations to accept them, or at least to give them some second thought. This is said in order to deflect any possible astonishment on the part of Swedenborg's defenders in case some reputable psychologists come in the future to view von Winterstein's work with favor. By the same token it now becomes necessary to pass judgment upon the soundness of that work.

Most non-psychoanalytical psychologists will agree, as has just been suggested, that Freud's theory of the repression of sexual impulses into the "unconscious" sometimes affords the most valid explanation of certain psychological phenomena. The present writer is no exception. But he, in common with many psychologists who give Freud credit for making an important contribution to the problem of human motivation, is convinced of the partial falsity of *any* theory in science or philosophy that depends upon *a single exclusive principle of causation,* and of the need for subjecting any individual application of such a theory to very searching scrutiny. There are many psychological reasons for rejecting von Winterstein's analysis of Swedenborg; because of their technical nature these need not be discussed here. One simple fact that would seem of itself to disqualify the analysis of Swedenborg is the fact that Swedenborg died a century and a half ago! Psychoanalysis, which is admittedly sometimes successful, is at its best (and its best falls far short of its frequency of endeavor) when it is applied to *living persons,* whose lives subsequent to the analysis afford some opportunity to confirm or deny the analyst's judgment.

There is no need to go further into the matter in order to announce a general repudiation of von Winterstein's psychoanalytical efforts. It is as true now as it was thirty years ago that in all such cases the burden of proof is on the psychoanalyst. Taking into account the multifarious and minute observations made by Swedenborg, it is plainly not credible that these were merely by-products of a perverted preoccupation. Had his theology been but a superficial outline of metaphysics after the manner of some of the German transcendentalists to whom Coleridge compared Swedenborg, the case for the inverted Oedipus complex might conceivably appear more plausible when considered as a whole. In logic, those who defend Swedenborg against the latest psychoanalytical accusation have but to demand that the psychoanalyst demonstrate his thesis for all parts of Swedenborg's voluminous theological writings from the time of his conversion to the time of his death!

The second, or *psychological* problem concerning Swedenborg's conversion, is dealt with more adequately by von Winterstein than the question of psychoanalytical conflict. By judicious citation of Swedenborg's diaries during the crisis, this author shows that the crisis involved the main features of mystical conversions as studied hitherto by psychologists of religion. Various standard features are present in Swedenborg's conversion: the sense of sin; the bodily accompaniments and sensory disturbances; the special feeling-qualities of stress, surrender, and confusion; the sense of a new life, etc. These characteristics, well known to readers of James and here stated in close accordance with the wording of Starbuck,[7] are singled out by von Winterstein from Swedenborg's total experience, although they are of course *interpreted,* when interpreted at all, by the Gospel according to Freud. Nevertheless, von Winterstein is perhaps the first psychological writer to point out systematically the presence of typical conversion phenomena in Swedenborg's religious life. This amounts

[7] Starbuck, Edwin D., *The Psychology of Religion,* New York: Scribner's, 1900, *passim.*

to doing the kind of service that one might have expected James to perform. Much research remains to be done upon the phenomena attendant upon mystical conversions, but von Winterstein can scarcely be held responsible for making the psychology of religion complete and serviceable in this regard.

It should moreover be stated in justice to von Winterstein that his estimation of Swedenborg's character shows some appreciation of the latter's spiritual qualities. His article ends with the following words:

> . . . we certainly do not wish to dodge the fact that the *elaboration* of the instinct-conflict by the *unique* ego of Swedenborg would have to occur in an intellectually and ethically gifted personality rich in childhood religious impressions, in order to produce from the evidence not merely an account of *any* passively homo-erotic nature, but of "one of the most important testifiers to the essential significance of religious mysticism." [8]

All in all, apart from psychoanalytical complications, the psychological treatment of Swedenborg constitutes a contribution that psychologists of religion generally will wish to consult.

The third problem discussed by von Winterstein, the psychiatric problem of *diagnosis,* seems to involve some considerations which cannot easily be set aside by followers of Swedenborg. The reader will recall that on this score von Winterstein agrees with Hitschmann's conclusion that Swedenborg suffered from paranoia. The fact that both writers are psychoanalysts does not seem to alter in any material way the weight of their contention. It must be confessed that according to some accepted clinical characterizations of paranoia, many of Swedenborg's peculiarities closely fit the diagnosis. From one description of the paranoid condition we learn that

> the delusional system appears so logical that others may be persuaded of its truth. . . . These delusions are characteristic and their general trend results in the following so-called forms of paranoia:
>
> Delirium of interpretation, the patient misinterprets the facts, and finds hidden and portentous meanings in the most trivial occurrences.
>
> . . . Religious paranoia, the patient develops some original but usually fantastic religious system. This accounts for many actual and would-be religious leaders.[9]

Viewed strictly from without and in a perfectly objective way, Swedenborg is certainly described by implication in the above summary. An especially characteristic symptom of paranoia may be seen in Swedenborg's conception of himself as the sole instrument of revelation of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem. New Churchmen will at once protest, however, that one *cannot* do justice to Swedenborg by being completely objective toward him. But most psychiatrists and psychologists are far from being New Churchmen! It therefore seems inevitable that, should Swedenborg's name come to have any prominent place in the future literature of psychology, this diagnosis of paranoia will in time become generally accepted. Very few if any reputable psychologists would venture to disagree with it. But the point here, which cannot be overemphasized, is the fact that any diagnosis of paranoia *is nothing more than a clinical description of objectively observed facts.* The question of how "insane," "deranged," or "demented" a paranoiac is in the popular sense of these terms *is not dealt with in the diagnosis itself, and is entirely a matter of opinion!* Pure paranoia, as it is known to clinicians, does not typically lead to hospitalization; it is carefully distinguished from the so-called paranoid form of schizophrenia ("split-mind") which furnishes most of the Napoleons and Jesus Christs to be found in mental hospitals. The writer believes that this fact gives the clue to the policy which Swedenborg's followers might adopt concerning his alleged "insanity."

Some policy is clearly needed. If it becomes customary for psychiatrists to classify Swedenborg as a paranoiac, the best line of defence would consist, not in denying the correctness of the designation, but in a demand for reexamination of the whole theory of "normality" and "abnormality." This is particularly to be urged in view of the fact that while some forms of paranoid alienation have been traced to actual disease of the brain, it is not likely that "pure paranoia" can be demonstrated to be an organic disease. Even if it were, nothing much would necessarily be proved. Taken by and large, our scientific knowledge of "insanity" is still exceedingly scanty. Why can not one grant that Swedenborg was a paranoiac, while at the same time contending that *it takes a paranoiac to produce a Swedenborg?* If by generally accepted definitions Swedenborg was alienated, so too was Jesus, and so too were a great many of the most distinguished leaders and thinkers of all ages! If the policy here proposed were adopted, it would tend to force recognition of the fact that what men choose to call mental alienation refers mainly to present-day ignorance of more profound aspects of mind. Such a policy could be successful; the previous policy, which has consisted in the contention that Swedenborg was "normal," whatever that may mean, has never made any appreciable headway. The New Church has been and is far too squeamish about words like "delusion," "hallucination," "misinterpretation," "fantastic," to select a few that occur in the statement of paranoia quoted above. These are only words; but as words, how can they fail to seem appropriate to Swedenborg's accounts of spiritual things, from the point of view of ordinary people who lack spiritual insight?

The squeamishness about mere words, which are simply more or less serviceable verbal tags, is illustrated by some attempts on the part of New-Church scholars to prevent their use at any cost. Whitehead, for instance, tried to show that Swedenborg was not a victim of "hallucinations" by citing "proofs" brought forward by psychical research! While this is bound to be convincing to those who know something about Swedenborg "from the inside," it simply

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[8] Von Winterstein, *op. cit.*, p. 338. (Italics are the author's, the translation the present writer's, and the quotation Meyer-Lüne's, the translator of Lamm.)

[9] Bridges, James W., *An Outline of Abnormal Psychology,* 3rd edition, Columbus, O.: R. G. Adams & Co., 1925, p. 147.

makes matters worse for those on the outside, who remain unconvinced. Whitehead asserted confidently that Swedenborg's doctrine and teachings "cannot now be passed by as the delusions of an insane mind."[10] The words to which he objects are not pleasing words; yet they are the accepted means of describing *from the outside* the impressions ordinarily aroused by a casual (or even a psychiatric) consideration of Swedenborg. In the long run, then, it would be better not to object to words, but rather to attempt to amplify their meaning so that they would include experiences that like Swedenborg's are "abnormal" *in the sense that the majority of people do not have them.*

William James provided us with a strong statement of the argument here being urged, when he wrote:

> In the natural sciences and industrial arts it never occurs to any one to try to refute opinions by showing up their author's neurotic constitution. Opinions here are invariably tested by logic and by experiment, no matter what may be their author's neurological type. It should be no otherwise with religious opinions. Their value can only be ascertained by spiritual judgments directly passed upon them, judgments based on our own immediate feeling primarily; and secondarily on what we can ascertain of their experiential relations to our moral needs and to the rest of what we hold as true.[11]

He went even farther, just as has been done in the present article. After quoting Lombroso to the effect that "genius is a symptom of hereditary degeneration of the epileptoid variety, and is allied to moral insanity," and other authors to similar purpose, he continued:

> Now do these authors, after having succeeded in establishing to their own satisfaction that the works of genius are fruits of disease, consistently proceed thereupon to impugn the *value* of the fruits? . . . No! their immediate spiritual instincts are too strong for them here, and hold their own against inferences which, in mere love of logical consistency, medical materialism ought to be only too glad to draw.[12]

These quotations so admirably fit the case of Swedenborg and his interpreters and misinterpreters that one is led to wonder if, in composing the lecture, James did not perhaps have Swedenborg in mind as well as the other mystics with whom he specifically dealt.

Let us now return to Swedenborg's fate at the hands of psychoanalysis, which admittedly possesses neither the insight of a William James nor the lofty love of abstract truth to which the followers of Swedenborg are committed. There are one or two points still to be suggested. Some readers, knowing that Swedenborg did not overlook the interpretation of dreams on his own account, have perhaps been wondering how his own perceptions accord with the theories of psychoanalysis. There is little to be said on this topic. Von Winterstein quotes many extracts from Swedenborg's dream diary, including the latter's own interpretive comments, summarizing these instances by stating that Swedenborg's interpretations of his dreams are "superficially religio-ethical (*anagogisch*) and in accord with his doctrine of correspondences."[13] Considering its source, this statement is all that could be expected. Other psychologists, however, might well investigate Swedenborg's dreams with some other instrument than psychoanalysis in order to shed what light they may upon a most interesting subject.

In conclusion, the fact should be pointed out that despite the treatment Swedenborg receives and is bound to receive from orthodox psychoanalysts, his own method of investigating the spiritual world, which involved some investigation of man, has much in common with the general purpose of psychoanalytical psychology. Both approaches go beyond the cut-and-dried introspections of a sterile psychology; both make use of symbolical or correspondential representations for equating discrete series of phenomena; and both seek an underlying dynamic principle that is far more adequate to the known facts than shallow and inert empiricistic "laws." That Swedenborg's spiritual principle happens to be sadly travestied by Freud's conception of the sex-urge is not in itself inimical to some broader formulation of psychoanalytical purpose. In other hands, the method yields other results; and it would not be surprising if the formal similarity should in time prove to afford a *rapprochement* between Swedenborg the psychologist (rather than Swedenborg the psychological problem) and present-day possibilities of plumbing the profundities of human nature. It was in this spirit that Roeder commended the work of making new discoveries to "those students of mental forces who are investigating the new psychology."[14] May others pursue this line of research in the same spirit and in full appreciation of what Coleridge, in reference to Swedenborg, called "a madness, indeed, celestial and flowing from a divine mind."

[10] Whitehead, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
[11] James, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.
[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
[13] Von Winterstein, *op. cit.*, p. 307.
[14] Roeder, Adolph: *Symbol-Psychology*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1903, p. 176.

Difficulties in Approach to Swedendorg

John W. Swanton

THE idea seems to be prevalent that Swedenborg represents himself to have been admitted into the spiritual world just as a man might be allowed to step behind a veil, that on the other side of that veil he saw absolute truths spread before him, and that when he returned to his usual state he committed those absolute truths to paper. And it is believed then, very naturally, that all statements he made are to be perforce accepted. Now what are some of the things we must believe if this is so?

Besides certain manifest small errors in dates and in terms (such as his writing "spiritual" where he meant "natural") which I suppose few would insist upon regarding as inspired, we encounter matters of some consequence: for example, such views as the instantaneous creation of separate species of animals and plants, and the unisexuality of the latter. There are followers of Swedenborg who believe that these statements must be accepted as they read. There is also that surprising assertion to the effect that children of matings between blacks and whites are black if the father is black and white if he is white (*Divine Providence,* No. 277). What line of argument may be used to substantiate that?

This last statement, like some others, is used by way of illustration, however. Let us pass on to more serious things.

In one or two places Swedenborg asserts that Egyptian hieroglyphs contain correspondences and can be interpreted only by means of them, yet we know that they have been interpreted without any such knowledge. Does that look as though all of Swedenborg's statements were necessarily to be adopted?

The instance most frequently cited, tending to discredit Swedenborg's illumination, is his testimony as to the inhabitants of the other planets in our solar system, and above all, of the moon. Down to the present time, all of the evidence which astronomers and astro-physicists have been able to accumulate on this point is decidedly negative. It is thought probable that some sort of vegetation exists upon Mars, but the presence of human beings there is regarded as improbable. Mercury is believed to be too hot and arid for human habitation, the outer planets too cold and perhaps not solid enough in content to support even a mineral crust, and the atmosphere of Venus seems unsuited to life such as we know it. Finally, the moon is supposed to be devoid of any atmosphere and its surface subject to such fearful oscillations of temperature that no seriously minded astronomer entertains for a moment the thought of human inhabitants there.

Some statements of Swedenborg regarding spirits in the life beyond, also seem incredible to the man of average intelligence, and I feel sure they would appear equally so to many of us who have happened to be born in the church if our memories of the past could be effaced and we were to encounter the statements for the first time. Thus we do not associate Elizabeth of Russia or Louis XIV with angelhood, and it is hard to justify Swedenborg's condemnation of Paul by what we know of that wonderful if somewhat too imperial apostle of Christendom. Indeed, what Swedenborg has to say about the fate of the fathers of the Church and of others who have left this world, seems to tie them up in a rather suspicious manner with particular doctrines. It would seem sometimes as though they were mere external images of the doctrines themselves.

Likewise, in reading Swedenborg's judgments of certain nations, one cannot help feeling that he attributes to them characteristics hardly true of the people as a whole. Among contemporaries in any nation we do not recognize such ethical uniformity as Swedenborg appears to imply. One wonders how far his objective impressions may have been colored by subjective states.

The possibility that some of the spirits of whom Swedenborg speaks were used to illustrate principles, rather than that they embodied them in their own persons, is brought strikingly home to us in his treatment of the subject of "profanation." Thus, he tells us that certain kinds of profanation are of such a dire character that a man is protected from them by the withdrawal of his perceptions of truth. Yet he does not hesitate to describe for the benefit of his readers spirits who *had* committed this sort of profanation and who are so far deprived of life and character as to be called not "he" nor "she," but "it." In one place he does, indeed, allow for the possibility that some few men may have profaned in this manner, but his exception would appear to limit the Divine mercy in having protected all human beings from such a cardinal crime except an unfortunate few.

I have presented these difficulties frankly, because it is useless to attempt to convince others of the validity of one's beliefs unless he is prepared to meet the most drastic criticism that can be offered.

I will also frankly admit that I cannot give a rational, satisfying reply to the criticisms indicated above on the basis of Swedenborg's infallibility. If a defender of Swedenborg has to assume the principle that if he is wrong in any single statement he is wrong in all, the defense might as well be abandoned entirely. A few will go on believing on this basis, a few may be induced to begin believing on this basis, but they will become fewer and fewer as time goes on, and in time all will disappear.

But why accept such a dogma? Nobody esteems Kepler less or hesitates to accept the validity of Kepler's laws of planetary motion because he mixed up with them certain untenable superstitions. No one declines to accept the truth of the law of gravitation because Newton's theory of

light was defective. In short, no sane person will refuse to accept the truths which some human being has been enabled or commissioned to utter because he held other opinions which were not true. I shall recur to at least some of the difficulties mentioned above, but we have first to inquire whether Swedenborg did utter any great, imperishable truths, or any principles so great that there seems to be assurance that they are truths. If so, there is no reason why all the world should not accept them as well as ourselves and treat his shortcomings or errors as it has those of Kepler and Newton.

Now, it seems to me that Swedenborg has given to us, or that there has been revealed to us through him, one great principle of which the world is in sore need, something which it feels that it has lost, and a vision of which it is floundering around wildly to regain,—the immanence of a Being who is impersonal only in the sense that He is more personal than man, not in the sense that He is a force or a principle. This immanence manifests itself in at least four ways,—in nature, in history as interpreted by means of the Scriptures, in Christ, and as an immediate experience.

The immanence in nature appears in the fact that both inorganic forms and living organisms express just so many aspects or fragments of the Divine Being. Mineral forms re-present Divine facts, vegetable forms Divine truths, and animal forms Divine emotions. All of these are partial representations of the human organism, and denote so many steps in the evolutionary chain leading up to it, or so many collateral lines leading from such steps. They express the human form because the human form is the most perfect finite counterpart of the Divine Form. Thus it is that the Divine immanence appears in nature.

The book of nature deals with the progressive entrance of the human into the world which in reality means the progressive entrance of the Divine Humanity into it. The story of this concludes one important chapter with the creation of man but is carried on through human history to the Incarnation in Jesus. All human history has reference to this and leads up to it just as was the case in cosmic and organic history. Various aspects of the incarnation are prefigured in profane history before and after the invention of writing, both in the direct succession of churches or phases of human thought leading down to the Word made flesh and in the collateral phases of it. It is equally prefigured in sacred history, which gives us that particular stream of events which contains the interpretation of all the rest and is like cosmic and organic evolution and profane history in being a record of the Incarnation and containing the Divine Humanity immanent in every part.

In the cosmos and in cosmic history God is immanent. In life forms and in organic evolution He is immanent. In human history, profane and sacred, He is immanent. In the Word He is still more immanent. For all these are records of His becoming and expressions of His accomplished presence. But in Christ He actually reached the plane of the natural world and became evident to human senses. Although New-Church interpretations of the earlier revelations of Deity are accepted in some measure by other religious bodies, the New-Church view of Christ is, it appears to the writer, firmly held as yet by no other body of believers. On the one hand are men who, either on account of an inherited theology or fear of modern scholarship, clothe their explanations and conceptions of Christ in obscurity. Sometimes they consider Son and Father as if they were two separate persons. Sometimes they unite them but move them off the earth and out of contact with finite humanity. On the other hand, Christ is frankly regarded as finite, and his teachings are deemed to be *about* God, but not God's. If that be true, there is no reason why we should regard Christ as a unique personality or accept any more of his teaching than happens to appeal to us. God also is left in His infinite aloofness and we must be satisfied merely to infer His nature. According to the New-Church conception, however, God did come to the very lowest plane of existence, underwent human experiences on that lowest plane, revealed Himself directly to His children.

Those who separate Christ from God and seek God in nature and in human history are not wholly wrong, because they seek as much of God in Christ as their reason allows them to admit. My belief merely is that they do not go far enough. God is immanent in nature and in human history, and in Christ, but in Him immanent to an extent that they have been unable to dream of—that we ourselves who profess acknowledgment of that immanence have not been able to dream of. The meaning of the creation, of the evolution of the cosmos, of the evolution of organic life, of human history sacred and profane, of the history of the inorganic, organic and human worlds, as it has come down to us and as it unfolds itself into the misty future, is just this: the Word made flesh, the Incarnation. In it is contained the mystery of the Living God. The trouble is mankind has not dared to believe that God both could and would come down to the plane of matter itself where His children dwell. Yet this is exactly what a parent would do for a child. There is nothing miraculous about it. It is the most natural thing in the world.

But, if the world has been slow to believe that most natural of all things, we, who should have the most vivid appreciation of it, have been remiss in that we have placed wholly unnecessary obstacles in the world's path. We have insisted that only through the organized New Church can one come to a realization of these things. We have insisted that all of the labor and scholarship expended upon the letter of Scripture, along with a large part of that devoted to natural science, has been worse than useless. We have insisted in establishing an "either . . . or" dogma as between modern scholarship and the Theological Works of Swedenborg. We have performed the pharisaic act of placing heavy burdens, the heavy burdens of reconciling the revelations of the New Church and the revelations of science, upon other people's shoulders, and have relieved ourselves of them by the simple dogma of Swedenborg's

infallibility—a New Christian Judaism of a most odious type. We have strained out the doctrinal gnat and swallowed the doctrinal camel.

The difficulties which a first reader of Swedenborg is bound to encounter, like those which I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, are not insuperable, but if they were all valid they would sink into insignificance before the great truths of correspondences, influx, and the Divine Humanity.

None but the extreme literalist will be disturbed about those mistakes which arose from a naive and natural acceptance by Swedenborg of the science of his time. As I have pointed out, we do not feel compelled to credit everything that men like Kepler and Newton wrote because so much that they did write was of perennial value. Even the error regarding hieroglyphs need cause no profound disturbance. Every external thing has, in the last analysis, a mental or spiritual cause, and behind the hieroglyphs lay such a cause. The pictographs from which they originated were chosen in response to mental influences which, if there is a Providence, were determined inmostly by that Providence. They had, moreover, gone through a period of development which had altered them markedly, but this development was guided at every step by that Providence. You think that would be impossible? But if Providence does not rule in little things, there is no ground for believing that it does so in great ones. It is a principle repeated constantly by Swedenborg himself. I am not going to affirm, however, that Swedenborg from his knowledge of correspondences would have been able to give us Pen-daur's great poem of the Battle of Kadesh from the inscriptions on Abu-Simbel. He would have provided us with some interpretation of the spiritual correspondences of the figures given in the various characters, and his perceptive power was such that some of these might have contained the reason why such characters were originally chosen. However, it is unlikely that he appreciated the fact that hieroglyphs had been modified essentially in the course of time and had acquired purely conventional significances. Swedenborg had discovered, or, in theological language, there had been revealed to Swedenborg, the principle of correspondences which places spiritual and natural things in relation. He saw it everywhere and was impelled to interpret every mystery by it. Such is the history of every great discovery. It takes time and systematic usage to determine its limitations and its proper application. Until now we, like Swedenborg, have been so much dazzled by the revelation that we have bestowed upon the first expositions of it an almost idolatrous regard, worshiping its first formulations and not trusting ourselves to enter upon a serious study. Swedenborg's *"Nunc licet"* has passed entirely over our heads.

Swedenborg's treatment of the moon and planets and their supposed denizens, creates a much more difficult situation. But before taking up this question as concerns him, I wish to point out the fact that a serious problem confronts Christians of every type and non-Christians who believe in any sort of Providence. If the cosmos with its myriad points of light is as devoid of human life as many astronomers would have us believe, an explanation of its purpose would seem to be in order. I have heard the assertion that it is to "show forth the glory of god,"—but is God such a vainglorious being that He must perform "stunts" like a spoiled child? Indeed, in that case He would seem to have less intelligence than the child, for the latter always takes care to provide himself with an audience; whereas, supposing our earth to be the only abode of human life, a very small audience is provided for the Divine spectacle, and one which is able to take in only an infinitesimal part of the show. Excuse the apparent levity. Bad logic on the highest of themes inevitably tends to elicit a smile when its significance is fully unfolded.

I suppose that most religious people meet this question by ignoring it or by trusting to the future for an answer; but it is not therefore ignored by all men, and has made and is making atheists and humanists by the score.

Whether or not Swedenborg is right, he does give us an intelligible reason for the existence of the material world; it is a means to the creation of the human race and to a heaven of human beings upon whom the Divine can exercise His love. Creation exists for the fulfilment of the Infinite Love.

Therefore Swedenborg is altogether consistent in his *expectation* of finding the planets inhabited. Although there is, at the present time, no positive evidence of any sort of organic life on any planets except our own and Mars, it must be said that such evidence derives its validity largely from the assumption that human life is impossible under any other conditions than those which we experience on our own planet, and we know that organic life here has been conditioned by adaptation to this globe over many million years. Had conditions been different there is every reason to suppose that the history of organic life would have been different. Indeed, we have proof of that in the known adaptations of living forms to hotter or colder conditions or to smaller supplies of oxygen. This is not to say that there is human life upon the moon, since that satellite of ours is supposed to have no atmosphere and its surface is subject to terrific extremes of heat and cold in alternation such as flesh as we know it could not endure for a moment. It is to be added, however, that we do not know the entire history of the moon and are unable to speak with confidence regarding its past.

But I must insist on Swedenborg's behalf that, right or wrong, he did have the courage to accept in his treatment of other material worlds than ours a principle consistent with the concept of a Divine governance, and that any mistakes he may have made in this connection do not invalidate the greater principles to which I have referred above. They admonish us, and perhaps were intended to admonish us, that we are not to accept Swedenborg as an infallible guide but to prove his principles for ourselves.

And this leads us to still another matter, the validity of the spiritual-world experiences which Swedenborg had.

Or I should rather say, the nature of those experiences, because there can be no doubt as to their actuality.

I have called attention to the fact that certain of these experiences seem to be illustrative of spiritual principles rather than themselves spiritual realities in the exact form given. Although I hold that there can be no doubt of the reality of the spiritual world, of its congruity with the material world, and of the fact that man lives there after death with all his faculties complete except more perfect, one wonders just how perfectly descriptions clothed in material imagery do coincide with their spiritual counterparts. The parallelism between Swedenborg's subjects under discussion and his spiritual scenery is certainly marked, but it reflects his conceptions or descriptions of the spiritual world.

But whatever subjective element entered into Swedenborg's spiritual experiences, it will not be scientific to classify them as entirely of a subjective nature until we know more about the mind and its environment, and have plumbed the depths revealed by latter day psychological and psychic research.

In this study I have attempted to face honestly certain difficulties which present themselves to a student of Swedenborg. Nothing is gained by ignoring these things or by the ancient subterfuge of covering with a veil of sanctity what cannot be rationally understood.

"Survey"

Under this heading Die Neue Kirche (*monthly journal of the German-speaking New Church*) *in its December, 1936, number, reproduces an article from another German periodical,* Literatur. *We translate the article with its author's notes, together with the introduction and added note of* Die Neue Kirche, *plus a note of our own.*

INTERESTING comment on H. v. Geymuller's book, *Swedenborg und die übersinnliche Welt.* The magazine *Literatur* gives the following review under the title "The Northern Faust," by G. R. Heyer (Munich). We reproduce it here unabridged although the book and Swedenborg are discussed only in the latter half of it, for what is said by way of introduction seems to us very much worth reading and will certainly interest our readers.

"There is taking place in increasingly definite circles of earnestly inquiring, spiritual men, a fundamental estrangement from the conception of life and its purport with which our fathers were imbued. They thought the highest aim was investigation and collection of the maximum number of data, an investigation made 'without assumptions' (for they regarded this as possible). This they thought was the way to find the key to all knowledge and the most complete control of life. But we see more and more plainly that the whole, when forgotten in eager examination of a thousand details, is not to be recaptured subsequently or refashioned; indeed, that apart from constant effort *sub specie absoluti* the just apprehension of details can hardly be begun. The place, connection and meaning of the details either remain unknown or are determined arbitrarily unless there is thought for a higher order in which they exist. With this insight, which does not represent fatigue or resignation but recollection and a start upon a better, and a better based, information, there is associated the further realization that the striving of mechanistically minded generations after a perfected control of nature has led unavoidably to the exact opposite: nature, whose powers we thought to master, has imperceptibly become the mistress, and we her slaves. As the man of the mechanical and technical age decried and rejected the essentially spiritual and high orders of the pneumatic realm, making free to regard them as irrational, mystic, and metaphysical presuppositions, he fell back on *re-ligio* (re-binding) to that higher principle which we call God, Spirit, the Highest, Light, whatever you will. Yet it is that which alone gives the human being the disciplined direction of the forces of nature and permits their incorporation and arrangement in a realm which the human being is called on to build up, both by his membership in the immaterial and by his responsibility to the creaturely.

"The decline for a time to the grossly visible and tangible was comprehensible, of course. It was necessary, in order to recall the occidental mind from its one-sided and bloodless flight in the void, in order to ground it again if only in this crass and primitive fashion. But now that this has succeeded so well that earthiness, even interment, threatens, the eyes of all who see farther turn toward horizons and paths which will enable things in their fulness (dead in themselves, as we see it) to become living again by being embraced within a greater whole. We do not shrink[1] from views, from cosmic and transcendental orders of things, the mere suggestion of which was a horror and derision to a day of technical knowledge. We are merely aware again that perception is not bare observation, is not passive apperception, but is an actively conducted process of selection and rejection. The achievement of even a scientific picture of the world is never an assumptionless impersonal, objective process. Only the assumptions must not be such as inhere in private peculiarities, subpersonal judgment, moods and inertia, but in that higher understanding penetrating the great and significant human

[1] Count Keyserling's latest book, *On the Personal Life,* offers a notable example

being. The objectivity of the materialist is still to be preferred to personal subjectivism. But this will be overcome as a man is affected by the devotion which for the first time yields true knowledge and genuine truth.

"This Faust-like scepticism about the meaning and value of all which the character Wagner[2] studied so hotly and eagerly—such an enlargement of the field of vision as occidental man is now experiencing—Swedenborg[3] experienced so deeply that his career was plainly divided into two halves by this inner occurrence. At the outset he was what we would at once acclaim as a brilliant scientist of the elder academic kind: mathematician, physicist, inventor of many machines, mining engineer, chemist, and biologist; he was ennobled, and admitted to the Swedish House of Nobles. Faust's despair befell him in his fifty-fifth year. One hundred and fifty years before psychoanalysis, Swedenborg carefully noted down his dreams, on which he set a high value; these dreams brought profoundly disturbing visions, so that he admitted the impossibility of grasping the world of coarse material and lower reality apart from insight into the higher connections and the first enlivening forces of the whole. With the northerner's capacity for deep concentration, with attention to secret voices and visions, he became better and better acquainted with a hierarchy of realities, the understanding of which, as he learned, was naturally conditioned by the development of inner organs appropriate thereto.

"Because of these inner experiences, the instinct in a materialistic time has been to dispose of Swedenborg as mentally disturbed, a lazy accommodation to our indifferent way of thinking. The idea is refuted just by the fact that for the next twenty-nine years of his productive life Swedenborg not only presented, with the greatest mental clarity, the manner of the secret inner life as this was revealed to him, but throughout he was anything rather than a recluse victimized by pathological hallucinations. To his death (of which he foretold the day and hour) he remained highly respected, healthy in body, and in spirit a wholly well adjusted member of society.

"It is another question whether we can join him in the precise form of his interpretation that he stood in association with 'angels,' 'spirits,' and the souls of the dead. In many ways one would be inclined today to understand these inner experiences of his psychologically rather than metaphysically. Still these are questions which we occidentals are only beginning to take up, in answering which the scientific man above all will be cautious. . . . In the spheres into which Swedenborg penetrated in vision, our psychological work is engaged with the preliminary experiences.

"Geymuller has made the uncertainty or rather the almost complete ignorance which prevails in these questions peculiarly plain in contrasting the information of Swedenborg with the spiritistic teachings and with the investigations of psychic research. Even without the often richly extended analysis of doctrinal spiritualism, from the comparison with psychic research (thoroughly and clearly presented by Driesch in the German edition), it would be doubly plain, as we have previously intimated: much in Swedenborg is still hard to grasp, much is still impossible psychologically and urgently in need of verification, things in his life are cause for reflection (in our opinion, de Geymuller would have done better not to be silent on them; the passages in the Dreambook which in the English edition are represented by dots are just those which are indispensable for a critical examination of the material[4]); finally, with Swedenborg everything has sprung from the whole and is addressed to the whole. How different it is with the material which students of psychic research habitually put forward! Here it is the next thing which is seen, and as no breadth or perspective, no interior knowledge, and no grasp assigns room and place to what is seen, the whole of what has been collated remains without significance, blind, groped for in the half dark, and is full of that distressing lack of assurance which makes of such investigation a maze of bewilderment. The boldest assertion of Swedenborg has, according to our sentiments, far more verisimilitude and cogency than what is relatively the most assured experiment of psychic research doing duty for religion.

"If the more far-seeing among us—rightly—draw to our counsel Indo-aryan Yoga and the Tibetan and Egyptian Books of the Dead; if we find more perception of the backgrounds of the inner life in the tragi-heroic life-work of a Staudenmaier than in the bulky volumes of truisms of the psychiatrist and the experimental psychologist; then in all strictness we shall have to include Swedenborg's life and work in the exertions of the western spirit after higher knowledge. The excellently translated work of de Geymuller constitutes an indispensable aid for this; hearty thanks are owing for the large number of quotations made verbatim from the works of the Northern Seer, many of them for the first time in German."

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[2] The author refers to that professorial assistant of Goethe's Faust, Wagner, who seemed so knowing to himself in the knowledge he had assembled piecemeal by reading.

[3] H. de Geymuller: *Swedenborg and the Supersensuous World.* Translated by Paul Sakmann. Revised and provided with a supplement on "Current Psychic Research" by Prof. Hans Driesch. 340 pages. Cloth, 8.5 marks. Deutsche Verlagsanstalt. Stuttgart, Berlin.

[4] In Swedenborg's Diaries, which he wrote for his own use only, much is written in allusions and illegibly, which explains the dots in the printed edition. [Editor, *Die Neue Kirche.*]

But the writer in *Literatur* must be referring to dots in an English edition which does omit passages of the Diaries. In an American edition of the *Journal of Dreams* these passages are given, without expurgation, though they are rendered in Latin, to reserve them for the student. De Geymuller does not try to reproduce the Diaries as a whole, and cannot be charged with silence. [Editors, THE NEW CHRISTIANITY.]

EDITORIAL

A NEW year opens before us with the beginning of our third volume. The magazine plans stimulating discussions for all who are concerned with the fortunes of Christianity. Christians are constrained by conditions to re-think their course carefully. Disappointing attendance at religious services, or the difficulty of presenting the content of the Christian Gospel so as to arrest the indifferent, is only a more immediate and minor difficulty. There are, as ever, widespread absorptions in the material benefits of which life is so unprecedentedly full, and in pleasures which have been set in a new accessibility to the mass of people. To squeeze in a hearty and active religious interest in these fast-moving times requires alertness and extraordinary effectiveness. Then there are great national movements, abroad if not here, yet not without suggestion to people here, in which religion is superseded by devotion to nationalistic ideals and a national leader. As the principal speaker in the recent nation-wide Preaching Mission said, fascism and communism are both of them absolute and totalitarian in aim, yet there is only one kingdom which is absolute and inclusive and which can ask from men their "all"—the increasing kingdom of the Christ.

THE results of the National Preaching Mission have been summarized well in periodical and newspaper by participants and observers. There were many gains. But there have also been some critical reflections on methods and results. One of these reflections was that religion has the power of its theology. Reconstruction of Christian thinking has not gone far enough to equip religious effort with a well unified and enabling doctrine. THE NEW CHRISTIANITY for this reason is calling attention over and over to the resource we have in the reformulation of Christian teaching from the Word itself in the works of Swedenborg.

Another critical reflection has been that the dynamic for a new advance has not been found and seized. Eventually, we think, a Divine initiative toward Christian progress must be uncovered. We cannot look to ourselves for the necessary dynamic. And for this reason, THE NEW CHRISTIANITY has emphasized the conviction of the New Churchman that the Lord Himself has taken the field, is leading to a renewal of the Christian life, and in the influences of His Spirit, the teaching of His Word, and the further opening of the Scriptures, is offering just the hope with which we can move buoyantly and in His strength toward a new Christian growth.

IN 1910 an International Swedenborg Congress assembled in London, England. Scientists had been struck by the scientific achievements of Sweden's eminent son. Interest in him as a scientist had been aroused first by Dr. Max Neuberger, of Vienna, who in an address to a meeting of medical men had expressed amazement over the anticipations of the best recent advances in Swedenborg's book on the Brain. Interest had spread rapidly to scientists in Sweden and in other lands, who found that they could speak as handsomely of Swedenborg's achievements in their own specialties—chemistry, geology, and other fields.

Leaders in the New Church in England were not slow to note this increasing interest and to signalize it with the Congress. They supervised a brilliant international gathering in London, at which many scientists were heard. The Congress was held in connection with the Swedenborg Society's Centenary, the sessions occupying five days, July 4-8, 1910. The transactions of the Congress have been preserved in a volume of 373 pages, copiously illustrated.

Today there is in Europe another wave of interest in Swedenborg. It is a very different interest. Now he is challenging the attention of psychologists. Of his psychology the Congress of 1910 took very little notice. And today it is not his psychology which challenges interest, but the man; he is a psychological problem. We print in this issue a paper by Dr. Spoerl which will indicate in a measure the character and extent of the interest in Europe. Dr. Spoerl is head of the department of psychology in a Massachusetts school. He is sympathetic with Swedenborg. His paper may be disturbing to New Churchmen, but the fact that this psychological interest in Swedenborg is not fraught with the praise that marked the scientific interest, should lead no one to ignore it. That interest will doubtless grow, for Swedenborg's experiences give men of the new sciences—psychology, psychiatry and psychic research—a field for examination probably entirely unrivalled. As Dr. Spoerl suggests, the interest should be studied, inauspicious though it may be at the moment; he even suggests a procedure the tenability of which should not be judged by its first disheartening impression on us. If there are problems—and who will say there are none?—and if these problems are going to be pressed, as they surely will be, they should not be evaded or suppressed by any one, as though the truth were unbearable.

We also reprint in translation a review which Mr. de Geymuller's book on Swedenborg and psychic research has received in Europe, presumably at the hands of a non-New-Churchman. In that review a more heartening comment is made on Swedenborg as a psychological problem; as the editor who first republished the review remarks, it also contains other informative discussion.

BOOKS

Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

THE RIGHT TO HERESY: CASTELLIO AGAINST CALVIN. *By Stefan Zweig. New York: Viking Press, 1936. 238 pages. $3.00.*

THE history of human progress is in large part the history of the bold innovator who challenges the accepted beliefs and the duly constituted authorities. Growth without change is impossible and the society which attempts to stifle dissent commits itself, in the measure in which it is successful, either to stagnation or violent revolution. All this would seem so obvious as to need no repetition were it not for the patent fact that the most powerful currents in the contemporary world are for the moment running in the opposite direction. Democracy is on the decline and dictatorship (whether Communist or Fascist is of small account) is rapidly extending its sway. Anything which serves to reveal the issues involved and the inevitable consequences of their working out can make a valuable contribution to the formation of current opinion.

Such is Stefan Zweig's *The Right to Heresy*. Though it contains no specific reference to current problems, it could not have been written by a German (and probably a Jew) without thought of the situation in Europe. Summarizing Castellio's *De Hereticis* he says:

"Who is entitled to direct a fellow-man's thoughts, or to consider the latter's intimate and most private convictions a crime at common law? Not the State, nor any other established authority. We read in the Bible that we are to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and Castellio quotes Luther to the effect that the earthly kingdom has command only over the body, whereas, as far as the soul was concerned, God did not wish any mundane law to prevail. The State is entitled to insist that every subject shall comply with the dictates of external and political order. Consequently, any authoritative interference in the internal world of moral, religious, and (let me add) artistic convictions, so long as these do not involve manifest rebellion against the essence of the State (in modern terminology, so long as they do not consist of political agitation), signifies an abuse of power and an invasion of the inviolable rights of the individual. For what happens in this inner world no one is responsible to the State, seeing that 'with regard to these matters everyone can make a personal appeal to God.' The State authority has no concern with matters of opinion. Why, then, should people foam at the mouth when they come across someone whose philosophical convictions differ from their own; why this instant call for the police; why this murderous hatred? In default of a conciliatory spirit, true humaneness is impossible. 'We can live together peacefully only when we control our intolerance. Even though there will always be differences of opinion from time to time, we can at any rate come to general understandings, can love one another, and can enter the bonds of peace, pending the day when we shall attain unity of faith' "(pp. 157, 158).

The book is excellently written, well translated, beautifully published. With so much to be grateful for, both in matter and in form, one is always open to the charge of ingratitude when he asks for more. Nevertheless it is impossible to escape the feeling that the book has limitations which will seriously detract from its full power to accomplish what is so sorely needed. Zweig is not entirely consistent in his account of the source of Calvin's hostility to Castellio. In such a passage as this he seems almost to be in possession of the true key:

"In Castellio's demand for liberty he felt there was involved an attack upon the fundamental principle of his own activities, upon the very idea of unified authority, upon the essential significance of orthodoxy; . . ." (p. 196). But most of the time Calvin is pictured as an inflated egoist, determined to crush anyone who ventures to cross him in any way. Zweig thinks his hostility to Castellio was due primarily to Castellio's strictures on Calvin's part in the burning of Servetus. What Zweig refuses to admit (though it crops out in his own account) is that Calvin after all was simply acting in the spirit of the times. That Zweig will not see this is doubtless due to an antipathy of his own to Calvin and his whole philosophy. But in thus refusing some measure of sympathetic understanding to Calvin and in picturing Calvin's actions as motivated by personal spleen Zweig really weakens the significance of the whole conflict. The clash was not between Castellio and Calvin as private individuals but between opposing philosophies of life, between the stagnant spirit of the mediæval age and a prophet of a new day. Zweig sees that men make history. It is equally true that history makes men. Only in that double recognition can we understand and deal with the problems of our own times.

FREDERIC R. CROWNFIELD.

ABRAHAM: RECENT DISCOVERIES AND HEBREW ORIGINS. *By Sir Leonard Woolley. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936. 299 pages, including index. $3.00.*

TRAVELLING by train through many New England cities from Boston to New York, I found ancient Ur of the Chaldees more vividly and significantly present to me than any of the places along the route. Sir Leonard Woolley's chapter imaginatively recreating the ancient city in Sumer was transporting me there, and taking me with an enthralling intimacy over that early home of Abraham.

The site of Ur was discovered in 1854 by a representative of the British Museum (pp. 61-64). A town with the name of Urfa had misdirected attention to itself; the mound which really buried Ur is not now "beyond the River," and so did not seem to be the likely site; but the Euphrates had changed its course and set the old town on the west of it. Excavations began in earnest only in 1922, to be carried on for twelve years under Sir Leonard Woolley.

It is in chapter III that the British archeologist gives us such a fascinating verbal reconstruction of the city, all details except the names of streets rested upon archeological evidence (p. 17). A flourishing city of at least a quarter of a million people arises before one; it depends on the agriculture of the surrounding district, but is itself engaged in an extended commerce. Details

include the usually white house-walls—colors were considered unlucky; the courses of study, even the teaching methods, in the schools are described. The scene and the society (chapter IV) grow in detail; historical records let one see how decline and desolation came to the place. It is Abraham's period which is most fully represented in the archeological sources.

A previous book by Dr. Woolley *(Ur of the Chaldees)* dealt at large with the city, however; the present book has to do more with Abraham. Abraham is not in the findings by name, but a new light falls on him. The Old Testament is silent about his antecedents; the discoveries at Ur disclose them. A very different Abraham emerges from the one we have imagined, a city man and not a nomad, a man who later carries himself, as the Old Testament stories intimate, in some aloofness from Bedouins (pp. 143 *f.*). Certain episodes in the Old Testament stories become more explicable (pp. 153 *ff.*), like Abraham's attitude, first and last, toward Sarah's treatment of Hagar and Ishmael, and his rising superior to human sacrifice. One of Dr. Woolley's arguments will, as he says, be found repugnant at first, but he presents it cogently and with evidence,—that in Abraham we have in the biblical stories a conflation of three figures (grandfather, son and grandson), hence the patriarch's incredible age of 175. To the first of these figures—an historical one certainly—is to be attached all that is said of the father of his people.

The most significant of all the findings is the light cast on Abraham's God. The city of Ur had a number of deities, chief of them the Moon-god. But the surprise among findings which touched religion was the unearthing of family chapels, a non-Sumerian feature. The Habiru in Sumer, of whom Abraham was one, worshipped a family god, had house chapels and buried their dead under the chapel floor. With this family god Abraham went on; there is not a word in the Bible about the Moon-god, of which he had been brought up a worshipper. Of the family god no images were made; this family god (Terah's and Laban's as well as Abraham's, according to the Bible) was also intimately possessed; he had no territorial limitations; he was the human, warm reliance of the family as the city declined and its official deities lost promise and prestige. Cleaving to him, Abraham was on the way to a God of universal significance. "The potentialities of the cult, which in other minds were still-born, he realized, and the forward step which he took was individual" (p. 241).

There is much else to be gathered from this excellently written and carefully argued book—among other things, the strong probability that Creation and Flood stories and the Hammurabi Code came into the stream of Hebrew readaptation through Abraham (pp. 176 *f.*, 183); and the testimony from the identity of local color in Ur and in the Bible that the Scriptural stories rest on contemporary documents of the only sort which would have existed at the time—family records (pp. 55-6, 41-2). The local color in Ur was too soon forgotten and lost, to be so accurately reflected in the Bible at a later time.

The whole book is a highly enlightening commentary—it is *the* commentary—on Abraham's having come from Ur of the Chaldees.

WM. F. WUNSCH.

CHARACTER AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. *By Stewart G. Cole. Nashville, Tenn.: Cokesbury Press, 1936. 249 pages, including index. $2.00.*

DR. COLE, now President of Kalamazoo College, was formerly Professor of Religious Education at Crozer Theological Seminary . He has participated in many significant movements in American educational life.

In this book he addresses himself to the task of better correlation of secular and Christian education. In the former is implied what the latter seeks to make explicit.

The book is well organized. An introduction puts the problem of allying more intimately the two cultural movements—secular idealism and Christian education—so that they recognize the identity of their aims and mutually enrich the young life, instead of creating conflicts as they do.

Part I is a discussion of the principles and processes of character development in secular education; Part II a discussion of the latest religious growth, in secular idealism, which Christian education makes explicit, or should make explicit. Each culture tends to think it has the whole task for itself. Dr. Cole's general point is that there is a common field, to be occupied by secular and church agencies in mutual recognition and complementary alliance. The two nurtures not only fail to travel together; they create puzzlement and conflict in child and youth.

Discussion is always specific. The range of it is surprising, in combination with intimate consideration of all items. The chapters of Part I are entitled: "The Child of Nature," "The Child in the Making," "From Impulse to Self-Control," "Unfolding Personality," "The Pattern of Experience," "The Child and Family Ties," and "Wholesome Childhood," while those of Part II are entitled: "The Religious Impulse in Child Life," "Expansive Religious Experience," "The Language of Child Religion," "Character and Christianity" and "Toward Christian Character."

Chapters are condensed treatises on their themes, chapter I on heredity, for example, and chapter II on environment, with conflicting positions carefully analyzed and assessed, as to "the relative merits of nature and nurture in character-forming and spiritual processes of life." Some sub-heads will indicate the variety and intimacy of detail: "The Position of the Eugenist," "The Viewpoint of the Euthenist," "The Prenatal Status of the Child," "The Cultural Lag of the Individual," "The Drifting Family Today," "Sex and Social Hygiene," "The Potentialities of Child Religion," "Christianity: beyond Character."

Definitely and illuminatingly utilized in the book is an extensive literature in biology, psychology, philosophy, religious education, physiology, genetics, etc. Each chapter is equipped with a bibliography. The book would be highly serviceable as a studied survey of literature on its topics and questions.

Dr. Cole, however, has a purpose of his own and not only organizes his material to further it, but re-thinks all his questions, and writes with definiteness and close down on the actualities of child life. We could quote many arresting passages. But we return to what he feels needs so much to be done —the better correlation of secular idealism and Christian educa-

tion; and quote his own summary (p. 15) of his eleventh chapter:

"If churchmen should catch the personal approach which Jesus practiced, Christianity could incorporate into its world view the character values that secular idealism cherishes and raise them to the level of divine sanction and worth. Unless the Christian faith accomplishes this high purpose with youth, it will fade out of their circle of life interests."

WM. F. WUNSCH.

CHRISTIANITY—AND OUR WORLD. *By John C. Bennett. New York: Association Press, 1936. xi, 65 pages. 50c.*

THIS little book (clear type, easy reading in two hours, fits in overcoat pocket) is the first volume of a series whose purpose is "to present simply, compactly, and inexpensively a number of the best interpretations of the Christian philosophy as a guide to Christian living today." The author has accomplished this purpose in a clear and interesting manner in four chapters.

In dealing with Christianity and Secularism, the author first discusses the insidious spread of secularism, fostered by the contemporary mode of life, and how a true Christian faith may give meaning to a universe dependent upon a personal God. The essentials of this faith are outlined and might well be used as a basis for a common Christian creed. The next chapter pragmatically develops the substructure of Christian philosophy, apart from any religious authority. Upon this substructure or *sine qua non* of morality is built the Christian ethic which brings morality to its finest flowering.

Perhaps most challenging is the chapter discussing Christianity and the Economic Order. Concerned only with the obstacles offered by capitalism to the Christian life, Bennett concludes that "under capitalism with its concentration of irresponsible economic power it must be one or the other—fear or bitterness." He closes this discussion with a few words concerning the obligation of the Church in the struggle for economic justice. The concluding chapter contains the pregnant thought that since Christianity puts loyalty to God before loyalty to any earthly power, the Christian Church is the only universal power which can hold our world together in the midst of conflicting nationalisms.

The author makes no claim to originality of viewpoint and indeed the book reflects an attitude reached by Christians who can claim to have thought deeply and realistically on contemporary problems. He has drawn heavily on such outstanding pioneer thinkers as Dawson, Horton, Lyman, Niebuhr, Oldham, Tennant and Van Dusen, as indicated by the brief bibliography appended. His lucid style is a delight to those informed readers who welcome an able summarization reflecting their conclusions. This book is required introductory reading for those who have shunned the "uncomfortable" implications of the Christian way and taken refuge in over-spirituality. I know of no better short and readable exposition of what Christianity may be made to mean in our world of 1937. May the forthcoming volumes (to be issued at the rate of three or four a year) add as much as this one to the layman's living library.

GUSTAVE J. BISCHOF.

THE HOLINESS OF JESUS. *By Arthur Davis Martin. Nashville, Tennessee: Cokesbury Press, 1936. 251 pages. $2.50.*

THE opening chapter of this book does much to clarify our ideas of holiness. The concept is made intelligible by tracing the stages through which it has passed. A very early idea of holiness (confining the analysis to what can be historically examined) appears to have been closely bound up with the primitive *taboo*, i.e., the prohibition against the touching by ordinary people of certain objects. Later, there emerged the concept of holiness as applied to things or persons *separated*, or set apart for Divine uses. These "holy" persons did not necessarily have to be good in ages when even Deity was thought of as some mysterious, terrible power, with no particular quality of goodness. Hence, even the insane, the diseased, the dissolute could be looked on as holy, if "religiously" set apart. Even today, in certain regions of the earth, idleness under certain conditions may be a mark of holiness. A scholar traveling in the Near East was told by his dragoman of a "holy man" in the neighborhood. "How is he holy?" inquired the scholar. "What does he do?" The answer promptly came, "Do? He be very holy man. He do nothing." (P. 18.)

The author is convinced that the Red Sea deliverance registered a noteworthy advance in Israel's understanding of holiness. To at least a few of the nation the realization that their God had rescued them from injustice must have marked Him off as one whose holiness was not only power but goodness. (Pp. 25-28.) And the work of the great prophets was to expand the idea that goodness and holiness are inseparably bound together in the Divine character.

The greater part of the book develops the thesis that the holiness of Jesus is the very holiness of God. Parts of it are necessarily controversial, for Mr. Martin feels called upon to deal with the arguments brought by some Jewish and Unitarian scholars. These, so far from conceding deity to Jesus, claim that certain of his words and deeds show anger, discourtesy and vindictiveness. The author handles these charges courageously and skilfully, and, as it seems to the present reviewer, in the spirit of fairness.

The author is very far from being a literalist in interpreting Jesus' words. He calls attention to the discovery of the late Professor C. F. Burney, i.e., that when the discourses of Jesus were translated from the Greek back into their original Aramaic "they fell naturally into recognized Hebrew poetic forms" (p. 115).

The objective of the book may be summarized in the following statement: "Belief in the sinlessness of Jesus is a reasonable conclusion from the absence of any recorded failure on his part to obey the Divine Will and from the absence of any confession of such failure, when we take this in conjunction with his acceptance of high moral testimonies from men, and with the sobriety and spiritual penetration of his judgments upon religious affairs, crowned by his deliberate acceptance of death as coming to him under the will of God" (pp. 230-31).

In some quarters the book has been criticized for its "orthodoxy." It is certainly orthodox in contending for the deity and holiness of Jesus and in its attitude toward miracles. On the other hand the critical point of view is much in evidence in the

author's handling of Scripture. And he protests against the "prosaic and literal fashion" of interpretation which would make Jesus simply the Second Person in a trinity.

The book is brilliantly written, and its main point of view is developed in a rich and original way. EARL C. HAMILTON.

THE RETURN OF THE WISE MAN. *By Winifred Kirkland. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1935. 59 pages.*

IN the deep hush of an inky black Syrian night the wise man, Caspar, waited outside of Jesrusalem, for dawn.

Thirty years ago he had seen God in a little baby. He had never forgotten the face. And now he was trying to find his son who had come to Palestine three years before in search of that face. That terrible cry which he had heard yesterday at the ninth hour, could that have been his, Caspar's, son?

As the wise man waited he saw the hill where crosses must have recently been. Could his son have died there? "Not your son but mine," came the answering voice of a woman—also waiting, watching.

Together they watched. "Both felt as if they were alone within a tent of tissue, beyond which unseen powers within the night were stepping close to them as breath" (p. 27).

Caspar read by memory from his son's letters living scenes from his three years with Jesus, so full of hope that this Jesus might be God,—hope which Caspar could not share until Mary kindled in him a new hope that her son might even return from death.

Caspar's son came by, crouched in despair, all hope gone, Jesus had been crucified. It was then that Mary showed the wise man who she was. And so the baby of thirty years ago and Jesus of Nazareth were the same!

Caspar shared with Mary a sense of life beneath the earth, of the opening of a door to heaven. "Time was forgotten, because the other world was pressing so near, where there is no time." The boy still sat, "an image made of lead." "God, let my son see what I behold!" Caspar prayed.

The guard were fleeing, the grave door open. "The boy stretched out his two hands toward One stepping from the portal of the tomb. . . . 'My God and yours, my father! He has returned to lead us!' "

Hope, even through temporary despair, grows into an overwhelming certainty, in this beautiful story so full of "mystery beyond the understanding of human senses."

MARGARET W. BRIGGS.

IN THE STEPS OF SAINT PAUL. *By H. V. Morton. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1936. ix, 499 pages. $2.50.*

SALES of this book have been sufficient to give it a place in booksellers' statistics among the leaders in non-fiction. That fact is sufficient assurance of its power to appeal to something more than a technical interest in Saint Paul. Anyone who likes an unusual and well written travel book will surely enjoy it.

Mr. Morton, as the title of his book indicates, has travelled over the territory where Paul travelled and worked. The eastern end of the Mediterranean basin has undergone many changes in the course of two millenniums, and only careful search reveals authentic relics of the past. Mr. Morton has sought these links diligently, and the accounts he gives of them are a most interesting part of the book. Nevertheless, it is not the occasional monument of the first century which will shed most light on the career of Paul for the majority of readers. That will come rather from the fact that the book makes real a world which to the average Bible reader is only a collection of strange names.

It must not be too easily assumed, however, that the world thus brought to life is identical with that in which Paul thought and worked. That can only be evoked by an historian with a special gift. Mr. Morton rightly disavows any technical knowledge of Pauline research, but the trouble is that on many matters the right to make any statement at all demands at least a modicum of such knowledge. To brush the whole problem aside leads to misstatement and confusion. The most striking example occurs in connection with his account of Ephesus. Here, contrary to his usual custom, the author considers rather favorably the recent critical theory that the epistles implying that Paul is writing from prison come from an unknown imprisonment in Ephesus. But when he comes to speak of Rome, Morton proceeds to give an account of the same epistles all over again from the traditional viewpoint that they were written there, quite as if the arguments he has already used did not exist.

Such naïveté should warn readers not to expect a serious contribution to Pauline study but it ought not to prevent them from enjoying it for what it really is—an extremely interesting narrative of an interesting part of the world, not the least of whose interest is its roots in the past and the part it played in the foundations of our faith. F. R. CROWNFIELD.

JOHN WESLEY AND MODERN RELIGION. *By Umphrey Lee. Nashville, Tennessee: Cokesbury Press, 1936. xlll, 354 pages. $2.50.*

THERE are many published biographies of John Wesley. Dr. Lee's book, however, is more than just another life of the great founder of Methodism. It is distinctly a "study of Wesley's religion and theology. . . . It is the author's conviction that the traditional conception of Wesley's experience and thought is in many ways misleading, and that a truer picture may now be presented by use of the richer materials available to the student" (p. vii).

In general the stock interpretation tends to ill-balanced emphasis. It slurs over the orderly, the gradual, the rational elements of Wesley's development and outlook. It assumes that his High Church Anglican upbringing was without fruitage of spiritual character; that he had no genuine faith until his experience at a Moravian meeting in London in May, 1738. In his evangelizing and organizing (as the traditional view has it) his emphasis on spontaneity and emotion tended to submerge the rational. It is widely held that the theology he utilized was mainly borrowed from German Pietists and English Dissenters, and that it had little relevance to his Anglican antecedents.

Contrary to this conventional picture, the author makes clear that Wesley's own mature judgment (in correction of his earlier statements) was that he did have a genuine, though weak, Christian faith before the epochal year 1738. (*See* pp. 96 *ff.*)

Though stressing the need of reviving religious spontaneity and feeling in a formal, intellectualistic age, Wesley himself certainly intended no slighting of reason in the interests of emotion. " 'It is a fundamental principle with us . . . that religion and reason go hand in hand, and that all irrational religion is false religion.' " (Wesley quoted, pp. 133-4.) Whatever vital influences Wesley experienced from Moravians and Dissenters, it seems clear that on the whole Wesley's theology was derived from the main current of Christian tradition, mediated through his Anglican environment (pp. 110 *ff.*). Wesley was not an original theologian. He accepted doctrine for the most part in its traditional phrasing, but he was no stickler for set forms of statement. He valued theology chiefly for its bearing on practical matters. Though committed to the doctrine of justification by faith, Wesley insisted on the primacy of love in Christian experience. Even faith he defined in part as " 'the revelation of Christ in our hearts,' by which Wesley meant a vivid conception of God's love" (p. 181).

Wesley's conception of religious "authority" is more broadly based than is always recognized. To him Scripture was the supreme authority, but he also brought in "reason and Christian antiquity." The latter phrase denotes his implicit trust in the teachings of the early Church Fathers, specifically those who lived before the Nicene Council of 325 A.D. (pp. 132 *ff.*). Again, notwithstanding the final emergence of Methodism as a separate church body, it is erroneous to assume that Wesley's own religious craving demanded a "Methodist" type of religion as a sheer substitute for Anglicanism. He did formally sanction a separate church organization in the New World, but in England he made strong efforts to retain his followers as a society within the Anglican Church. (P. 248.) To the very last he maintained that he had never withdrawn from the Church of his fathers; and he continued to worship in its communion whenever possible (p. 255).

We need to look further than to Wesley and early Wesleyanism for a religion which expressly includes our whole human make-up as a field for redemption. Wesley (quoted, p. 201) cites an appalling list of things regarded in early Methodism as incompatible with Christian profession. It includes abstention " 'from fashionable diversions, from reading plays, romances, or books of humour, from singing innocent songs, or talking in a merry, gay, diverting manner . . .' " In the matter of restraints Wesley himself evinced a tact and common sense not always observable in his immediate followers. His copy of Shakespeare, annotated with his own hand, would be a prized possession today. Alas, it was burned, not long after Wesley's death, by one of his preachers, in full assurance that the bard of Avon was the devil's own amanuensis (p. 203).

Wesley abounded in tender humanitarian zeal in behalf of the poor, the slave, and the oppressed (pp. 207, 208). It is natural to trace a connection between this early humanitarianism and the more searching, radical social emphasis of today. Among contemporary leaders in the Methodist communion, churchmen of the Economic Left are strongly in evidence.

Competent students recognize the part played by Wesley and Methodism in "the break-up of the old orthodoxy and of eighteenth century rationalism" (p. 301). It could be said (though not treated in the book) that a good number of Methodist leaders have acknowledged the less tangible but potent influence of Swedenborg in the same direction.

Why does modern religion need to reckon anew with Wesley? Largely, the author holds, because we are suffering from a one-sided emphasis on certain indispensable phases of Wesley's message,—"experience," warmth, spontaneity. A more inclusive discernment of things not hitherto realized,—i.e., the order, the rationality, the institutional emphasis comprised in Wesley's total appeal,—should be for the betterment of our troubled and groping time. EARL C. HAMILTON.

THE GREAT EVANGEL. *By Lynn Harold Hough. Nashville, Tenn.: Cokesbury Press, 1936. 167 pages. $1.50.*

THIS attractively printed volume preserves the Sam P. Jones Lectures on Evangelism, delivered by the Dean of Drew Theological Seminary in January, 1935, at Emory University. The Parthenon Press at Nashville manufactured the book, and a colophon describes the type used; the noticing reader may well be curious for the information, as he becomes alive to the ease of reading. It is too bad, however, that there are a number of careless misprints.

Dr. Hough evidently visualized evangelism in the existing conditions with sweep and intimacy before his thought distributed itself into these well organized chapters on "The Approaches to the City of God," "The Evangel which Convinces the Mind," "The Evangel which Masters the Conscience," "The Evangel which Wins the Heart," and "The Evangel which Speaks to the Whole Life." The timeliest demands on the Gospel are steadily in view; the possibilities of the Gospel and the ways of meeting the demands are very stimulatingly portrayed and urged. It will doubtless be the minister who will gain the most from the book, but the layman also will find his interest rekindled in the effective presentation of the Christian message.

Dr. Hough contrasts the ever disappointing cities of men and the ever beckoning City of God, which has gates to welcome and satisfy every manner of contemporary approach and longing (chapter I). He sketches evangelism's power to make this City authentic to the mind and to employ Christianity's great arguments in the face of prevalent theories of thought, of morals, art and religion, and of the nature of the world (chapter II). The moral struggle succeeds in reaching victory, peace and grace only as it draws upon the resources of religion; chapter III is a most arresting picture of the mastery of the ethical conscience by the spirit of religion. The Cross places deep in the Great Evangel a Divine love to which through all our sophistication we still respond "with immediate and honest simplicity" (chapter IV). Inner and outer life, individual and society, life here and hereafter—all these in inseparability are addressed by the Great Evangel (chapter V). This bare résumé of the main thought may nevertheless serve to indicate how many acute problems of the ministry today Dr. Hough must touch. In each chapter, discussion starts arrestingly and kindles as it proceeds; there is the familiar gift of unhackneyed illustration; there is illuminating citation of biography, history and general literature. How timeless the Christian message is as well as how necessary it is, is borne in upon the reader by the very fact that it is conceived in such timely fashion.

WM. F. WUNSCH.

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